27 JUN 1958

MAN IN INDIA

VOL. 33 APRIL-JUNE 1953 NO. 2

THE ANGLO-INDIANS OF CALCUTTA

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Introduction

SOON after the re-discovery of the Mendelian laws in 1900, attempts to apply them in man resulted in the pioneer work of Eugen Fischer (1913) on the Boer × Hottenot crosses in S. W. Africa, which he took up in 1908. Fischer's work evoked considerable criticism which had its natural death on the publication of Rodenwaldt's (1915) researches on the Malayan crosses from Kisar. It was laudable on the part of Nelson Annandale just about this time (1916-1919) to take up the studies of the Anglo-Indians of Calcutta, and he was guided to this work in order 'to throw some light on the question of the origin of the human races by fusion'. It is extremely unfortunate that such valuable data, the only one of their kind in India, have never been thoroughly worked upon from the standpoint of Annandale, although anthropology has been pursued for the last quarter of a century in the very same laboratory in which Annandale himself worked.

Scope of the present work

Mahalanobis (1922, 1931, 1940) has published three monographs on the stature, head length and other characters of the Anglo-Indians. In the second monograph, the original somatometric data have been published, and they form the basis of the present study. It would have been useful if the somatoscopic data could be utilized for the present study ; but unfortunately they are not available. In the present paper, an attempt has been made to interpret the somatometric features of the resultant cross when compared with the two parent stocks involved in the crossing. The authors are perfectly aware of the shortcomings of this study since no comparison could be made with any female data from Bengal. There are unfortunately very few such data in this country and the few mentioned by Guha (1935) are not yet available. He has only published the mean values which are of little use in a study of this kind. Much in anthropometry is being sacrificed for the sake of statistics ; mean gives a handy uniform picture no doubt but it hides the variabilities in the population.

An attempt has also been made to find out the degree of intermixture with the help of Ottensooser's formula (cited in Gates, 1947) in the Anglo-Indian population. Greval and Chandra (1940) have published the blood group data of the Anglo-Indians of Calcutta and in a preliminary study by one us (Sarkar, 1942-43) the dominance of the European elements in the population was suspected. For comparison, Fisher and Taylor's (1940) British Isles data have been utilized.

Stature

A glance at Coon's (1939) map of stature will show that the British Isles have no short statured population at all. The lowest stature has been found to be 165 cm. in individual villages of Wales ; as such, the short stature of 15% among the Anglo-Indians appears to be due to the Bengali element. Very short stature is predominant among the low castes (5·8%), and its frequency among Anglo-Indians (1·5%) is 2½ times higher than in the case of high castes, and as such the influence of the low castes is also apparent in stature. Annandale in his introductory

note to Mahalanobis's 1922 monograph has mentioned the different social strata in the Anglo-Indian community, among whom the Kintalis occupy the lower end of the social scale. He measured 'few or no Kintalis', but his statement, 'it is unusual for an Anglo-Indian to know much of his family for more than two or three generations back and at the present time in Calcutta at any rate, most of the community are the result of marriages of persons of mixed blood' goes to show that some Kintali blood might have entered into the population already.

The Anglo-Indian population shows the highest frequency (55·5%) of medium stature in contrast to the highest frequency of tall stature in the British Isles. This again appears to be due to the Bengali element.

There is not much difference in the percentages of tall stature between the Anglo-Indians and the higher castes, and they even agree fairly well in the proportion of very tall character of stature.

TABLE 1

STATURE

	Bengal Brahman %	Bengal Kayastha %	Bengal Vaidya %	Bengal Low Caste %	Anglo-Indians %	British Isles
Very Short (—1499)	0·80	0·90	—	5·80	1·50	Range :
Short (1500-1599)	14·28	14·90	12·00	34·60	15·00	Scotland 160-171 cm.
Medium (1600-1699)	57·90	62·30	66·00	53·00	55·00	Wales 150-180 cm.
Tall (1700-1799)	26·55	21·10	22·00	6·60	27·00	Mean :
Very tall (188+)	1·04	0·80	—	—	1·00	172 cm.

Head Form

The head length of the Anglo-Indians varies between the minimum of 156 mm. and the maximum of 212 mm., with an average of 182·24 mm. (Mahalanobis, 1931). The cephalic breadth ranges between the minimum of 128 mm. and the maximum of

TABLE 2

CEPHALIC INDEX

	Bengali Brahman		Bengali Kayastha		Bengali Vaidya	Bengali Low Castes		Anglo-Indians	British Isles
	Risley %	Raichaudhuri %	Risley %	Raichaodhuri %	Raichaudhuri %	Risely %	Raichaudhuri %	%	
Dolichocephalic	22·00	19·25	31·00	13·80	10·00	33·32	25·80	32·0	Range . 76-80 Mean : 75
Mesocephalic	51·00	43·15	45·00	56·05	57·00	49·62	50·00	40·50	
Brachycephalic	22·00	31·30	19·00	24·25	31·00	15·41	21·00	22·00	
Hyper-brachy-cephalic	5·00	6·23	5·00	5·90	2·00	1·84	2 20	5·50	

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156 mm. The cephalic index varies between the minimum of 64·8 and the maximum of 93·2.

The high cephalic length of the British is already well known. Coon (1939) has pointed out, 'Since the Mesolithic time the British have possessed, even during the Bronze Age, heads of unusual length'. Among the Anglo-Indians, 5 individuals have been found with head lengths above 200 mm. There is unfortunately no elaborate data on the proportion of the different cephalic indices in the British Isles and as such the means and ranges have been given in place of the percentages of different head forms, and the deductions have been drawn from Coon's distribution maps.

Table 2 shows the percentages of different head forms among various castes of Bengal as compared with those of the Anglo-Indians. Coon has said, 'England, Scotland and Wales are all fundamentally mesocephalic and no regional mean falls below 76 or rises above 80'. The same is true of all the Bengal castes and the Anglo-Indians. The noteworthy difference between the latter and the British Isles lies in the extent of brachycephaly. The Anglo-Indians show 22% of brachycephaly and 5·50% of hyper-brachycephaly as compared with 31·3% and 6·23% respectively among the Brahmans, 24·25% and 5·90% among the Kayasthas, 31% and 2% among the Vaidyas and 21% and 2·2% among the low castes. Brachycephaly is thus higher among the high castes of Bengal than among the low castes, and it appears that the Anglo Indian brachycephaly is due to the Bengal castes, of which the high caste element is stronger than the low caste. The weight of the low caste contribution appears to be comparatively less, as is evidenced by the amount of hyper-brachycephaly among the Anglo-Indians. In the British Isles, Wales has about 15% of brachycephaly of which the highest concentration of 26·5% (Peate, 1925) has been found in the North Dyfi Basin and the lowest of 10·3% in South Dyfi Basin. The amount of Welsh blood in the Anglo-Indian population is unknown. There is no doubt that the Angle population had already a certain amount of brachycephaly in them.

In Table 2, Risley's data have also been incorporated not only

to find out the increasing nature of brachycephaly in Bengal but also to present the Anglo-Indian data in relation to an earlier observation and a later observation by Chakladar (1936) and Raichaudhuri (1952). It will be apparent from this table how brachycephaly has increased since Risley's time and this increase is noticeable in almost each and every caste individually. It will be seen from Table 2 that among the Brahmans brachycephaly has increased from 27% in Risley's time to 37·53% in the present day. The same increase has occurred among the Kayasthas from 24% to 30·15% and from 17·25% to 23·20% among the low castes. The same is also apparent when the low castes are taken individually. Among the Goalas, Risley found 12 2% of brachycephaly while Raichaudhuri found the same to be 18%. The Pods according to Risley had 17% brachycephals, which Raichaudhuri found to have increased to 32%. The Bagdis according to Risley were 6 1% brachycephalic while Raichaudhuri found the same to be 12%. The Chandals of Risley and the Namasudras of Raichaudhuri are the same people, and their percentages of brachycephaly are 25·4% and 24% respectively, and this is the single exception to the above increase. Caste system has not lost its rigidity enough to allow intermixture between the above castes, and the probable explanation of the above increase is the dominance of brachycephaly over other head forms.

Form of Nose

It will be seen from Table 3 that while the nasal index of the British Isles varies between the leptorrhine range of 62 and 65, the Anglo-Indians possess all forms of nose similar to those of the Bengali castes. Platyrrhiny and hyper-platyrrhiny have been found to be 7·2% and 0·2% respectively among the low castes, while the Anglo-Indians show the same peculiarity in 6% and 1% respectively. They have been found in a much lesser frequency among the high castes and it is probable that the platyrrhiny of the Anglo-Indians is due to the low castes. It is difficult to say anything as regards leptorrhiny or mesorrhiny, and they are present in almost equal percentages among the Anglo-Indians. Both these two characters are found in high percentages among the Bengal castes.

TABLE 3

NASAL INDEX

	Bengal Brahman %	Bengal Kayastha %	Bengal Vaidya %	Bengal Low caste %	Anglo-Indians %	British Isles %
Hyper Lepto.	2·50	1·70	1·00	1·20	0·50	
Leptorrhine	71·13	56·35	43·00	40·80	45·00	Range : 62-65
Mesorrhine	26·28	39·40	55·00	50·40	47·50	
Platyrrhine	0·15	2·60	1·00	7 20	6·00	
Hyper Platy	—	—	—	0·20	1·00	

Blood Groups

The phenotypic and the genotypic frequencies of the Bengal castes, the Anglo-Indians and those from N. England, S. England and Scotland have been given in Table 4. Anglo-Indians rank closer to the British Isles in respect of gene p than the Bengal castes while in the frequency of q, they stand almost midway between the above two. They are somewhat nearer to the high castes in respect of this gene than the low castes. The same is also observed in respect of the gene r ; the high castes approaching very closely Anglo-Indians in respect of this gene. This will be apparent from Table 5, where the degree of intermixture for each gene has been worked out in respect of each pair of groups.

It will be seen from the above table that in the make-up of the p gene of the Anglo-Indians, the contribution of the two Bengal groups of castes is almost equal, while the British Isles contribution varies at 108%, 83% and 175% for N. England, S. England and Scotland respectively. That the Anglo-Indian p is largely due to the Angle population will be obvious from the above values. In respect of the gene q, the contribution of the two English groups is equal. Both N. England and S. England have contributed 59% in the case of high castes and 66% in the case of low castes, while Scotland added more of this gene in the respective percentages of 63 and 70 among the high and the low castes. The rest of the percentages has been made up by the Bengal castes. Although

TABLE 4

BLOOD GROUPS OF ANGLO-INDIANS COMPARED WITH BENGAL & THE BRITISH ISLES

Group	No.	Phenotypic Frequencies				Genotypic			Frequencies			
		O	A	B	AB	p	q	r	D	p-	q-	r-
High Caste Bengali	675	35·15	22·99	35·72	6·19	·158	·233	·593	·011	·159	·239	·602
Low Caste Bengali	312	31·17	20·67	39·79	8·35	·158	·280	·558	·004	·158	·280	·561
Anglo-Indian	346	37·28	37·86	19·36	5·49	·247	·133	·610	·009	·249	·134	·618
North England	8716	48·60	40·34	8·54	2·52	·244	·057	·697	·002	·242	·060	·698
South England	106477	45·23	43·16	8·51	3·10	·267	·060	·672	·001	·267	·060	·670
Scotland	10969	52·02	34·23	10·48	3·32	·210	·070	·720	0	·210	·072	·720

the frequency of the q gene of the Anglo-Indians stands midway between the Bengal castes and the British Isles, the actual contribution of the British population is greater than those of the Bengal castes. It is thus similar to the p gene in behaviour though its weight is not so heavy. This is noteworthy in view of the very low frequency of the gene in the British Isles.

The order of the genes p and q is changed in the gene r. Here the weight of the Bengal high castes is predominant over that of the Angles. In the case of the low castes, N. England and Scotland have only contributed a lesser amount than that of the high castes, while the contributions of the low castes 48%) and S. England (52 %) are almost equal. The high caste contribution varies as 83%, 76% and 86% respectively in the case of N. England, S. England and Scotland ; the rest being made up by each of the latter. The low caste contribution in respect of gene r is 58% and 64% respectively for N. England and Scotland. It will be thus seen that the British element is the dominating one in the make-up of the blood groups of the Anglo-Indians. It has been found to be greater in respect of the two genes p and q in all the cases, while in respect of gene r the Bengal castes appear to be dominating.

TABLE 5

PERCENTAGE PROPORTIONS OF GENES p, q AND r IN THE TWO POPULATIONS (BRITISH ISLES AND BENGAL) IN ANGLO-INDIANS OF CALCUTTA

Groups	p	q	r
High Castes N. England	·8 108	41 59	83 17
Low Castes N. England	·8 108	34 66	58 42
High Castes S. England	17 83	41 59	76 24
Low Castes S. England	17 83	34 66	48 52
High Castes Scotland	·76 176	37 63	86 14
Low Castes Scotland	·75 175	30 70	64 36

Summary

1. The Anglo-Indian anthropometric measurements taken by Dr. Nelson Annandale in Calcutta during the years 1916-1919 and published by Prof. P. C. Mahalanobis have been analysed morphologically.

2. The Anglo-Indian data have been compared with those of high and low caste groups in Bengal and the British Isles data. Risley's Bengal data have also been taken into consideration.

3. The stature, the head form and the nose form have been analysed in Tables 1, 2 and 3.

4. The influences of the above two Bengal groups of castes and the British Isles are apparent in the Anglo-Indian data and they have been discussed for each character. Brachycephaly and hyper-brachycephaly are present in fairly high frequencies among the Anglo-Indians and it has been shown that the frequency of this character of the head has increased since Risley's time.

5. The blood group data of the Anglo-Indians have been compared with similar data from the two groups of Bengal and the British Isles data. The degree of intermixture has been worked out for each pair of groups, i.e., one British Isles group and one Bengal group, to show the relative contribution of each group in the make-up of the Anglo-Indians in respect of the three blood group genes.

6. It appears from the above studies that the British Isles element is predominating in the Anglo-Indians.

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SOCIAL CHANGE IN BENGAL IN THE LATTER HALF OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

By JYOTIRMOYEE SARMA

Calcutta

A society in isolation changes slowly. Its contact with the cultures of other societies, bringing about new economic conditions, new institutions and ideologies, produces change in its technology, social institutions and sacred ideologies. Usually the change does not take place in an integrated manner. One aspect of an institution may undergo a more rapid modification than other aspects. Usually the sacred ideologies are most resistive to change, and aspects of institutional or technological structure held sacred by the society change more slowly than the secular aspects. As the changes do not take place simultaneously in all directions, a society may come to hold many incompatible elements. Conflicts may arise between the old traditions and the new absorptions. Ideologies do change, although slowly, and in a certain group of the population if not through all. If the persons with the changed ideologies happen to occupy a position of power and influence, they may exert conscious efforts to bring about desired changes and to bring conformity between the old elements and the new. The efforts for change may be directed by a group of persons informally or through the formal structure of associations. In certain matters the help of the political institution may be sought in bringing about change through the passing of laws. The enactment of laws, however, is not enough to produce the necessary change, they merely proclaim certain acts to be legal in the society if they are performed. Organized change in certain aspects may be favoured by all the population and adopted readily, whereas organized change in other aspects may fail to receive popular approval.

The society of Bengal in the latter half of the nineteenth century saw many changes. It was an age marked with consistent and conscious efforts for change in many aspects of society

by the intellectual leaders of the day. This movement for change or reform, as it was called, started earlier in the century, and the enactment of legislation by the foreign rulers for the control of social practices was introduced for the first time when *satidaha* (suicide of Hindu widows on their husband's funeral pyre) was forbidden by law. Rammohan Roy and others of the Hindu community who initiated the movement against *satidaha* and supported the enactment of the law forbidding it marked the beginning of conscious social change in Bengal in the modern era.

It is said that the forces which brought about the intellectual movements in the nineteenth century were 'the impact of British rule and the intellectual stimulus caused by the Christian missions......A third factor was the great work of the European oriental scholars whose publication of noble Sanskrit texts created a wide interest both in India and the West'.[1]

Contact with the European ways and education in the English language made the people of Bengal self-conscious, and they felt it necessary to defend the status of their culture in the eyes of the Western world. According to their tastes and beliefs, they made distinctions between certain desirable and undesirable aspects of their culture, and sought contradictions or justifications respectively from the ancient codes and sacred literature. To defend Hinduism from the attack of Christian missionaries a group of Bengali Hindus reinterpreted Hinduism from the *Upanishads* establishing their belief in one God, and renouncing the polytheistic, mythological, ritualistic, and the image worshipping aspects of the prevailing Hindu religion. The group called itself the 'Brahmo Samaj' (Society for the worship of Brahma) under the leadership of Rammohan Roy in 1828. Though it had its foundations in the *Upanishads*, the Brahmo Samaj gained much stimulus from the controversial discussions with the Christian missionaries. The Hindus of the day felt the Brahmos to be more like Christians than Hindus. From the time of its foundation, the Brahmo Samaj drew in its fold many of the rising intellectual class in Bengal. Then from 1850 to about 1880 the Brahmo Samaj went into its most active phase, first under

[1] C. F. Andrews and Girija Mookherjee, *The Rise and Growth of the Congress in India* (London : George Allen & Unwin Ltd. 1938), p. 23.

the leadership of Debendranath Tagore, and then under Keshab Sen and others.[2]

Besides preaching its distinctive religious beliefs, the Brahmo Samaj was energetic in the promotion of social change. It was especially active in supporting the cause of female emancipation. It worked hand in hand with other organizations in maintaining and spreading female schools, fighting for the introduction of women in community functions, and the removal of the *purdah*. After Vidyasagar moved for the remarriage of Hindu widows, the Brahmo Samaj sponsored such marriages whenever it found willing parties. The Brahmo Samaj also supported a movement for raising the age of marriage for girls. Moreover, it sought to obliterate caste differences and then initiated inter-caste marriages. These events will be observed in greater detail in the following pages.

The Brahmo Samaj also encouraged a temperance movement. In the early and middle nineteenth century excessive drinking among the upper classes became a problem in Bengali society. As the drinking of intoxicating liquors was held in disfavour in Hindu society, especially in the upper stratum, it was made to be a symbol of free-thinking and liberation from the conventions of the orthodox society. The habit grew in excess with its concomitant evils. However, perhaps in the natural course of events, as well as due to organized efforts, intemperance in the educated class seemed to have declined towards the end of the century.[3]

The Brahmo Samaj was active not in the city of Calcutta alone, although this is where its leaders aggregated. Centres of the Brahmo Samaj appeared in all the large towns of Bengal in the east and west, north and south, and the movements started in Calcutta were felt throughout the province. The Brahmo

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[2] *Ibid.*, Chap. II.

[3] Rajnarain Basu, *Atmacharit* (Calcutta : 1909), pp. 40-44. Also see by the same author *Se kal ar e kal*, first published in 1874 (Calcutta : Bangiya Sahitya Parishad, new ed.), pp. 77-78.

Samaj also sent out preachers throughout India, and they established and maintained branches in many places.[4]

Besides the Brahmo Samaj other forces and personalities were at play in this age in bringing about organized social change in Bengal. The greatest name in the social history of the province in this period is that of Ishwara Chandra Vidyasagar. And there were others who although retaining their affiliation with orthodox Hindu society aspired for change in certain spheres. Along with the aspirations of the leading citizens of Bengal, the Government became more and more inclined to undertake certain social responsibilities, especially in the field of education. And as integrated action in the Hindu community to control its social policies was lacking, the help of formal legislation was sought whenever any major changes were introduced by the leaders.

Within the changing social framework sketched above, the major social trends and events will now be studied topically. The following seem to have been the most outstanding changes in the latter half of the nineteenth century in Bengal :—(1) increase in mass education in both the Bengali and English languages ; (2) the beginning and spread of female education ; (3) movement for the obliteration of the social difficulties of Bengali women ; (4) movement for the obliteration of caste differences ; (5) the beginning of political consciousness and the formation of associations for the furtherance of political goals ; (6) revival of Hindu religion and its reinforcement of national consciousness. Each of these topics offers a subject for concentrated study. In this short paper, however, the writer has presented only sketches of the main events of the period, and has based her studies on the autobiographies and the biographies of the great men of the time which contain available information on the social history of their days.

Before the Government took to the spreading of schools on a mass scale in 1844, ***pathsalas*** (primary schools each maintained usually by a single teacher) for boys existed in Bengal in the city

[4]Shivanath Shastri, *Ramtonu Lahiri o totkalin Bango samaj* (Calcutta ; S. K. Lahiri & Co., 1903), pp, 258-259, 274-275. See also by the same author *Atmacharit* (Calcutta ; Prabasi Karjalaya).

area as well as in the rural regions. There, the boys of the locality received primary education in the vernacular language. The expenses of these *pathsalas* were borne by the local *zemindars* or other rich men. The number of these *pathsalas* cannot now be ascertained.[5]

The Christian missionaries had also endeavoured to maintain elementary schools in Calcutta and in the mofussil areas. In these schools the vernacular language used to be taught, but at the same time Christian religious teachings were also given. The latter were objectionable to the Hindus, but as the schools were supported by the missions they drew students especially from the low income families.

Although schools for boys were numerous then, proper text-books were lacking. A 'School Book Society' was formed in Calcutta in which were included many of the well-known literary people of the day. The function of the School Book Society was to produce vernacular school text-books. Raja Radhakanto Deb of Shovabazar, well known for his scholastic and intellectual endeavours was associated with this Society and wrote many Bengali texts individually or with others.

The School Book Society then established some model schools through which they aimed at reforming the existing *pathsalas*. It supervised many of the latter. David Hare was also associated with this Society, and he established three free schools in Calcutta. Moreover, thirty students were sent by the School Book Society at its expense from its *pathsalas* to the Hindu College every year. In 1833 due to financial depression in Calcutta the Society had to curtail its activities and expenses. Only one English school was maintained by David Hare, and it was later famous as the Hare School.[6]

The decision to teach the people of India in the English language was taken by the Government in 1835 when Bentinck was the Governor-General. Before this time the Government had supported the teaching of Sanskrit and Arabic only in some

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[5] Upendranath Mukhopadhaya, *Hindu jati o shiksha* (Calcutta : Sri Sri Kali Ghose, n. d.), Vol. II, pp. 349-350.

[6] Jogesh Chandra Bagol, *Radhakanto Deb* (Calcutta : Bangiya Sahitya Parishad 1944), pp. 22-28.

recognized schools and colleges. Mass education, however, could only be through the vernacular language. In 1844, under the administration of Sir Henry Hardinge one hundred and one village *pathsalas* for boys were established in many places in Bengal, Bihar and Orissa. Vidyasagar was given a partial responsibility for the selection of teachers and the building up of these schools. The lack of proper text-books for the use of children was a great handicap at the time. In order to meet this need Vidyasagar wrote elementary text-books, and these have earned him as much credit as his greater scholastic works. He then submitted to the Government suggestions about subject matters of teaching, the number of teachers required, their pay, the location of the schools, inspectors for schools and their pay, and the supervision of the schools already in existence. These suggestions were valued highly by the Government, and in 1855, while Vidyasagar was already a professor in the Sanskrit College, he was appointed as the Assistant Inspector of Schools. The selection of teachers for these schools was a crucial task. It was necessary to train the teachers for the task of teaching the young. So in 1855 the Government opened a normal school at Sanskrit College for teachers' training at the suggestion of Vidyasagar and under his supervision.

In the year 1855 and in early 1856, Vidyasagar established twenty model boys' schools where his teaching techniques were practised, in the districts of Nuddea, Burdwan, Hugli and Midnapur. After three years the schools were found to have produced satisfactory results. Moreover, Vidyasagar helped in the establishment of many private schools. He bore the complete expenses of the school in his native village, and at the end of his life when he resided near a Santal village he maintained a school for the Santal boys.[7]

Many other persons took the initiative in founding schools in the rural areas, and if the schools functioned properly Government help was sought and received. The Brahmo Samaj also encouraged the establishment of schools. In later days the City

[7] Brajendranath Bandopadhaya, *Ishwara Chandra Vidyasagar* (Calcutta : Bangiya Sahitya Parishad, 1944), pp. 46-63.

School for boys established in 1878 by some of the leaders of the Brahmo Samaj become well known. As many of the leaders taught in the school it was popular in the community for maintaining a high educational standard.[8]

From 1855 onwards, after the Company Government received orders from England, English schools appeared in many places, and in almost every village Bengali schools and middle schools were founded. Moreover, normal schools for the training of teachers grew in number in many parts of the province.[9]

The development of higher education continued to increase. It has already been mentioned that the Government had maintained colleges even before it gave its aid to the primary schools. Government colleges were established in many of the leading towns of Bengal before and after 1850. Hindu College and Sanskrit College had gained their reputation earlier in the century. In 1856 the Calcutta University was founded. In 1864 with the aid of several leading men of Calcutta, Vidyasagar established and supported the Hindu Metropolitan Institution. This was the first college founded and supported by the Bengali people entirely by themselves, and without any European teachers.[10]

With the increase in the number of educated persons, Bengal saw a great literary renaissance, and a development of the Press both in the English and Bengali languages for the control of public opinion. The literary growth in this period was phenomenal, and many of the novels, dramas and essays written in this period illustrate the social trends of the day.

The movement for female education in Bengal had been going on since the early nineteenth century. Many families had their girls educated at home with the help of private tutors. Moreover, small schools were conducted by missionary women, and especially endowed by the Bengali Ladies' Society.[11] The endeavour for female education on a large scale, however, appeared in the late nineteenth century. The concentration of the society upon

[8] Shastri, *Ramtonu Lahiri o tatkalin Bongo samaj*, p. 309.

[9] Bandopadhaya, *op. cit.*, pp. 95-97.

[10] Shastri, *Ramtonu Lahiri o tatkalin Bongo samaj*, p. 205.

[11] *Ibid.*, pp. 188-189.

raising the status of its women may be said to be one of the most striking features of this period.

The first non-sectarian school for girls was founded by Bethune in Calcutta. While he was the President of the Education Council, with the help of Vidyasagar and Modonmohan Torkalongkar, and the encouragement of others, he established in 1849 the Calcutta Female School, later known as the Bethune Girls' School. Just as Hare dedicated his whole life for the education of boys in this country, Bethune completely dedicated himself to the cause of female education.[12] Raja Radhakanto Deb, an enthusiastic supporter of female education, opened a *pathsala* at his house for girls at about the time of the opening of the Bethune School.[13]

The Bethune Girls' School created a stir in the community. The idea of educating the females faced much opposition in many levels of the society. While some of the literate class sent their daughters to the school, the mass of people made fun of it. It may seem strange to the reader that only one hundred years ago, the ideas concerning female education were the following :— (1) women do not have the amount of intelligence necessary for acquiring an education ; (2) women have never been educated in this country and it is against the *Shastras* for them to be educated ; (3) women if educated face misfortunes and become widows ; (4) women if educated will not have any respect for their families and will go into evil ways ; (5) women have no need for education as they are not expected to fill any public offices. The proponents of female education had to prove the fallacy of these arguments to the literate public of the time.[14]

Vidyasagar like Bethune believed that the education of the women was absolutely necessary if the status of the country was to be raised. He was appointed as the secretary of Bethune's school. At that time the Government were interested in creating girls' schools in the various districts similar to the boys'

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[12] *Ibid.*, p. 187.

[13] Bagol, *op. cit.*, p. 82.

[14] Modonmohan Torkalongkar, *Stree shiksha* quoted in Brajendranath Bandopadhaya, *Joygopal Torkalongkar. Modonmohan Torkalongkar* (Calcutta : Bangiya Sahitya Parishad, 1914).

school. The authorities in England had given hope for the carrying out of such a scheme, and Vidyasagar was given to understand by the authorities in this country that whenever a school house was donated by a community and twenty girls enrolled, the Government would support the school. Between November 1857 and May 1858, Vidyasagar established thirtyfive girls' schools in Hugli, Burdwan, Midnapur and Nuddea. In May 1858, however, the Government received orders from England which made them refuse to undertake the complete support of these schools. After some indecisions the Government granted to Vidyasagar the amount of money already spent by him in the teachers' salaries The schools that had already been created could not be allowed to disappear, and Vidyasagar collected public funds in order to meet their running expenses. In this manner new schools were also opened from time to time.[15]

It has already been mentioned that the Brahmo Samaj took an active interest in the support of female education. Many of the leaders of the Brahmo Samaj held classes with groups of girls. After 1870 a school was opened for the education of adult women. The type of education imparted at first was that which would be useful in the home. A forward group of Brahmos, however, objected to this, and in 1873 the Samaj opened a separate school later known as the 'Banga Mahila Bidyalaya.' This offered the first opportunity of higher education to Bengali women. After a few years this school was merged with the Bethune school where a college division was opened for University education.[16]

A normal school was opened by the Government in 1862 at the Bethune School with the intention of providing female teachers. The Brahmo Samaj also gave its support to its establishment. However, this project then proved to be a failure as the women did not have any higher education.[17]

Along with granting women the privileges of literacy and then of higher education came attempts to erase many of their

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[15] Bandopadhaya, *Ishwara Chandra Vidyasagar*, pp. 64-78.

[16] Shastri, *Ramtonu Lahiri o tatkalin Bango-samaj*, pp. 304-305.

[17] Bandopodhaya, *op. cit.*, pp. 75-81.

social disabilities. Due to the system of *kulin* polygyny[18] practised at that time, and the prevailing custom of marriage of girls as children, the society then produced numerous girl widows. They suffered from a dismal fate as they were forbidden to remarry, and upon them were thurst the utmost rigours in expecting from them strict renunciatory behaviour throughout life. In many cases the girls slipped from maintaining their strict code, and in such times the society could give them no solace. The unfortunate girls often embraced Christianity with the hope of a normal home life.

The pathos of the Hindu widows aroused Vidyasagar, and he wished that they could be allowed to remarry. With this interest he looked through the *Shastras* and found in them suitable passages approving of the remarriage of widows. As people are reluctant to change their customs even from the point of view of necessity, Vidyasagar hoped that by quoting to them from the ancient scriptures he could introduce the remarriage of widows. His propositions, however, were received by the public with a great shock, and the idea rocked the orthodox society of the time. Hindu leaders of the community such as Radhakanto Deb opposed the proposition, even though they were in favour of many other types of social reform. They maintained that *Desachar* (local custom) was more important than the *Shastras*, and as the former was believed and practised by the people it could not be changed at will. Vidyasagar, however, managed to get enough supporters in order to have a bill passed by the Government legalizing the remarriage of Hindu widows in 1856. Shortly

[18] Kulin polygyny was an outcome of the hypergamous system of marriage which prevailed among the higher castes of Bengal. According to this system every caste was divided into three groups for purposes of marriage. The groups were ranked higher and lower, *kulin* being the highest group. The principle was that a man could marry a girl of a lower group, but a girl had to be married either in her own group or in a higher group. If she were given in marriage to a man of a lower group her family would face social degradation. As a *kulin* girl had to marry a *kulin* man who, however, had the choice of marrying either in his own group or in the lower groups, the number of suitable bachelors that could be found for *kulin* girls was extremely small. As the girls had to be married, nevertheless, they were given in marriage to men already married, and this polygynous system of marriage became the vogue of the day.

afterwards Vidyasagar with the help of many others of the community sponsored the marriage of a girl widow with one of his friends, and thereby initiated the system. Throughout his life he sponsored such marriages, and bore their expenses. His own son voluntarily married a widow. At this time, however, the feelings of the community ran so high against widow remarriage, that the young men who undertook to marry widows often did so at the risk of their lives, and faced social ostracisation later on. Vidyasagar did not live to see the remarriage of Hindu widows as a common and regular type of marriage. Whenever such marriages occurred they were the objects of curiosity and public comment. Vidyasagar faced much public displeasure for the introduction of this system, and spent the end of his life in seclusion.[19]

As an act of reform the Brahmo Samaj favoured and tried to bring about the remarriage of widows whenever it found voluntary parties. But even in the Brahmo Samaj instances or such marriages were few, and they were not always favoured by the families or the bridegrooms. Many of the Brahmos were ostracised by family members for sponsoring the marriage of widows.[20]

Along with the remarriage of widows came the reaction against multiple marriages by the *kulin* men. Vidyasagar again sought the help of the Government to introduce a bill preventing polygyny which often made widowhood for girls inevitable. This bill, however, was resisted by many of the Hindu community and it was not passed. The idea behind the resistance was that the Government may be allowed to widen the limits of a social practice, as by making a new type of marriage legal, dut it should not be given the power to forbid a social practice. Moreover, the prevailing public sentiment was that polygyny in Hindu society was dying a natural death, and no law was required to stop it.[21] The movement against it, however, made the public more conscious of the problem. Youths of the Brahmo Samaj

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[19] Shastri, *Ramtonu Lahiri o tatkalin Bongo samaj*, pp. 212-213.

[20] Shastri, *Atmacharit*, pp. 124-189.

[21] Bholanath Chunder, *Raja Digambar Mitra, C. S. I.* (Calcutta: Hare Press, 1896), Vol. II, pp. 260 267. ; also see Bankim Chandra Chatterjee, 'Bahu Bibaha' (multiple marriages) in *Vividha Prabandha*, Vol. II.

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volunteered to save girls from polygynous marriages if they were willing to escape. Some girls were protected in the Brahmo prayer hall until they were suitably married. Within the Brahmo Samaj the members were forbidden to undergo multiple marriages.[22] Members of the Brahmo Samaj also took it upon themselves to protect women who suffered from the injustices of Hindu society.[23]

Next came a movement for the restriction of child marriages. It was necessary to formally raise the age of marriage, especially for the girls as the prevailing custom was to marry girls at a more tender age than the boys. The Brahmos made an agreement among themselves not to give their girls in marriage before the age of sixteen. In 1871 when the Civil Marriage Act was being passed, the minimum age of girls for marriage had to be decided. First the physicians declared it to be sixteen years, but then they agreed to make the age of fourteen the minimum age for marriage, and this was so declared in the Civil Marriage Act of 1872.[24]

The Brahmos further granted to women the freedom to participate equally with men in public functions and brought them out of seclusion. In 1870 a group of younger men in the Brahmo Samaj objected to having the women sit behind *purdah*, and after raising such objections each of these members had his wife and daughters sit with him in the general assembly. Keshav Sen was not willing then to undertake this measure, and the issue of having the women sit in a general assembly brought about a division in the Brahmo Samaj. Later, Keshav Sen made arrange-

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[22] Shastri, *Atmacharit*, p 312.

[23] A Hindu lady being persuaded by the Christian missionaries went to them and became Christian. But she was not happy and wanted to return to her own society. Her family would not accept her then, and so she was protected by the Brahmo Samaj, and resided in the home of Shivanath Shastri, and later a Brahmo youth married her. Similarly, the daughter of a prostitute who wanted to live respectably came to a Brahmo family for protection. Later the family received orders from the Court to keep this girl. She also stayed in the home of Shivanath Shastri in later days until a Brahmo youth married her. Shastri, *Atmacharit*, pp. 169-171, 197-199.

[24] Shastri, *Ramtonu Lahiri o tatkalin Bongo samaj*, p. 606.

ments for the sitting of women outside of ***purdah*** for those willing to do so, and thereby brought back the seceders.[25]

Thus by allowing the women of Bengal to appear in public, granting them the benefits of education, and especially of higher education, the groundwork was laid for their future leadership in the community. The results of these benefits proved to be much more successful than the attempts to raise their status through legislation.

The Marriage Act of 1872 could be applied to sanction inter-caste marriages. The Brahmos again were the first to introduce this startling change in Bengali society. As the Brahmos declared themselves to be equal in worshipping the same God, they could not believe in caste differences. When Brahmins became members of the Brahmo Samaj, therefore, they had to discard their *upabit* (sacred thread) which symbolizes caste supremacy. Then in 1864, marriages were initiated within the Brahmo Samaj between persons who were originally of different castes with marriage rites then in vogue among the Brahmos. The group which did not agree on so radical a change as inter-caste marriage seceded on this issue and called itself the *Adi Brahmo Samaj.* The group which supported inter-caste marriage called itself *Bharatbarshiya* or *Indian Brahmo Samaj*, and changed the rituals of marriage so as to conform to their beliefs. But then the dilemma arose as to whether the new marriage rituals were legal. The *Adi Brahmo Samaj* claimed that the rituals it followed came from the *Shastras* and were therefore valid. Keshav Sen, on the other hand, who was the leader of the *Bharatbarshiya Brahmo Samaj*, held that the rituals of neither group were in conformity with the *Shastras*, and sought the help of legal people to settle the issue. The Government had been contemplating the enactment of a Brahmo marriage bill, but seeing the division within the Samaj, it changed its mind. Instead, it passed a completely secular bill, in which the parties being married had to declare themselves not to be members of any of the recognized religious groups, such as Hindu, Mohammedan or Chiristian. The Brahmo justified this declaration with the assertion that as they did not practise the Hindu

[25] *Ibid*, pp. 302-304.

rituals, and as their religion had a broader philosophical basis, their religion was not that of the Hindus, and they could declare themselves to be non-Hindu for the performance of marriage.

The declaration of Brahmos as not being Hindus created a great stir in Bengali society, and made the Brahmo Samaj unpopular.[26] Then in 1878 Keshav Sen gave his daughter under fourteen years of age in marriage with the Prince of Cooch Behar who was also minor in age, and the ceremony was performed with Hindu rites. This action on the part of the leader of the *Bharatbarshiya Brahmo Samaj* aroused much feeling in the Bengali society. This again brought a split in the Samaj. The group which denied the leadership of Keshav Sen after this incident called itself *Sadharan Brahmo Samaj* and managed its own affairs.[27] Due to these factions within the *Samaj*, and a revival of Hindu religion to be discussed later on, the *Brahmo Samaj* began to lose prestige in Bengali society, and the intelligentsia started to move away from it. Towards the end of the century the Brahmo Samaj lost its active force.

Besides these changes, another important development in the middle and late nineteenth century was the political consciousness of the people, and the growth of voluntary associations which brought together people dissatisfied with their role as citizens. In Bengal the Indian National Congress, the primary all-India political association, was preceded by organizations which introduced the fight for representative government, and group-activities for the furtherance of public cause.

The first of these, the British Indian Association, was founded in 1851. Its object was 'to secure improvements in the local administration of the country and in the system of government laid down by Parliament'.[28] Prior to this, two organizations existed in the whole of India, the Bengal British India Society founded in 1843, and the Zemindary Association (later called the Landholders' Association) founded in 1837. Both these Associations had broad interests, and included both British and Indian members. The Zemindary Association was not limited to the

[26] *Ibid.*, pp. 305-307.

[27] *Ibid.*, p. 309.

[28] Quoted in Andrews and Mookherjee, *op. cit.*, pp. 66-67.

zemindars alone but to all who possessed an 'interest in the soil of the country.'[29]

The split between the English and the Indian upper classes came in 1850 when Bethune introduced a bill in the Legislative Council to protect the poor peasants from being molested by non-official Englishmen.[30] Also at this time Bethune sought to bring about equal justice under law by introducing some bills which proposed that Englishmen, like Indians, should be tried in the law courts of the areas in which an offence was committed and not in the Supreme Court only as was the order of the day. The English community however raised such a protest against these bills referred to by them as the 'Black Acts' that they had to be repealed.

The British Indian Association was an outcome of the feeling of protest by the Indian upper class against the repeal of the 'Black Acts'. The Association had as members all the celebrated names of the day who were distinguished either in the possession of wealth or in the possession of intellect. Among the founding group, the first president was Raja Radhakanto Deb ; Devendranath Tagore was its first honorary secretary, and Digambar Mitra its assistant secretary.[31]

One of the major feats of the British Indian Association was the sending of the Charter Memorial in 1853. In anticipation of the renewal of the Charter of the East India Company, the British Indian Association sent a memorandum to the Parliament making known to them the disadvantages of the Company government, and laid out plans for a better administrative system. It suggested among other things that the legislature should be distinct from the executive body, and it should be of a popular character, and that the Legislative Council in Calcutta should have seventeen members, three selected from the 'most respectable and qualified inhabitants' of each Presidency, one member appointed by the Governor of each Presidency......and one appointed by the Crown to preside over the Council.[32]

[29] Quoted in *Ibid*, p. 98.

[30] *Idid.*, p. 100.

[31] Chunder, *op. cit.*, pp. 66-67.

[32] Andrews and Mookerjee, *op. cit.*, pp. 102-103.

The petition presented issues concering the whole of India and not Bengal alone. The British Indian Association claimed for itself an interest in the future of the whole of India. It established branch associations in Madras, Oudh and other places. But more than with the prospect of the future unity of India, the British Indian Association was concerned with the hostilities between the English and the Indians. Its efforts towards amicable settlement were not successful and finally the revolt of 1857-58 broke out. 'After the year 1858 the British Indian Association identified itself more and more with the interests of the landed aristocracy and ceased to represent the political ambitions of the Indian people.'[33]

One memorable event may here be mentioned, The British Indian Association was represented by a well known newspaper of that time called the ***Hindu Patriot.*** It was published by Harish Chandra Mukhejee who was a member of the British Indian Association. The bold views he presented on public policies brought him fame, and they were held in much esteem by the government officials. One of the leading problems in Bengal during and after the Mutiny was the indigo plantation system. The planters tormented the ryots to such an extent that in 1859 all the ryots who had been forced to plant indigo went on strike refusing either to plant indigo or to accept any advance money from the planters. The latter in turn dealt with them even more ruthlessly. Harish Chandra Mukherjee forcefully wrote in his paper about the plight of the peasants, and it was mainly through his efforts that the Government created an Indigo Commission in 1860 to look into the problem. Harish spoke before the Commission, and this angered the planters so that they brought a law suit against his paper. Harish died in the midst of it. His widow had to pay one thousand rupees as damage.[34] Members of the British Indian Association who were friends of Harish paid this sum and took interest in the welfare of his family.[35]

In 1875 the Indian Association was formed primarily as an

[33] *Idid.*, p. 108.

[34] Shastri, *Ramtonu Lahiri o tatkalin Bango samaj*, pp. 220-224.

[35] Chunder, *op. cit.*, vol. I, p. 160 footnote.

organization of men who did not belong to the aristocracy. Surendranath Banerjea was the main force behind this Association which included many of the leading men of the Brahmo Samaj. The members of the British Indian Association supported the idea of a political organization of the middle class and attended its inaugural meeting.[36] Surendranath was an admirer of Mazzini and in like manner he dreamed of Indian unity. The aims of this organization were, (1) the creation of a strong body of public opinion in the country ; (2) the unification of the Indian races and peoples upon the basis of common political interests and aspirations ; (3) the promotion of friendly feeling between Hindus and Mohammedans ; and, lastly, the inclusion of the masses in the great public movements of the day.[37]

The Indian Association was first engaged in an attack against the decision of the Government to lower the age limit for the candidates of the Indian Civil Service examination to nineteen years. Before this time the age limit was twentyone years. Lowering the age limit would have been of particular disadvantage to the Indian candidates. Surendranath Banerjea was appointed a delegate by the Indian Association to tour all India in order to gain support for a petition it was sending to the Parliament in England. It wanted a rise in the age limit to twentytwo years and a simultaneous Civil Service examination in India and in England. The tour of Surendranath Banerjea was the first all-India campaign for common political objects. Chapters of the India Association were formed in many parts of India. The petition was taken to Englad by Lalmohan Ghose.

There was a demonstration in its favour by the British Liberals at a meeting held in Willis's Room, where Lal Mohan's eloquent pleading of the Indian cause made a profound impression. As a result of this and of Dadabhai's persistent efforts the Indian Government was empowered to make direct appointment for the Civil Service from amongst Indians of proved merit and ability.[38]

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[36] Surendranath Banerjea, *A Nation in Making. Being the Reminiscences of Fifty Years of public Life* (Oxford University Press, 1925), p. 40.

[47] *Ibid.*, p. 42.

[38] Andrews and Mookerjee, *op. cit.*, p. 115.

Next the Indian Association agitated against the Vernacular Press Act passed in 1878. The main object of this act 'was to place newspapers published in the vernacular languages of India under better control and furnish the Government with ampler powers than the existing law provided.'[39] Mainly the middle class fought against this Act, and the Indian Association took it up as its cause. The Press Act was finally repealed by Lord Ripon in 1880. Then the Indian Association moved against the Arms Act and fought for local self-government.

In 1883 the first all-India National Conference was held in Calcutta. It was organized by the Indian Association. Representatives from every province of India attended this first National Conference.

The Second National Conference was held in Calcutta in December 1885 at the same time that the Indian National Congress met for the first time in Bombay. The organizers of one did not know the other. This time the National Conference was organized jointly by the Indian Association, the British Indian Association, and Central Mohammedan Association. W. C. Bonnerjee who presided over the first Congress invited Surendranath Banerjea to attend it. The latter declined as he had a large share in the organization of the National Conference and could not leave Calcutta while it was in session.[40]

In 1886 the Indian National Congress met in Calcutta. All the parties joined to welcome the delegates. One of the major issues of the Congress then and subsequently was the reform and enlargement of the Councils. Finally 'the Legislative Councils were reformed and expanded by the Parliamentary Statute of 1892, and the reformed Councils met for the first time in 1893.'[41] With the coming of the Indian National Congress, the Indian Association lost its political importance.

Towards the end of the nineteenth century the rising national consciousness of the country received inspiration from yet

[39]Hemendro Prasad Ghosh, *Press & Press Laws in India* (Calcutta : D. K. Mitra, 1930), p. 29.

[40]Andrews and Mookerjee, op. cit., pp. 116-117.

[41]Banerjee, *op. cit.*, p. 128.

another source. From 1860 onwards the Hindu society of Bengal was revitalized first by Ramakrishna and after 1893 by his disciple Vivekananda. The personality of Ramakrishna attracted the intelligentsia of the day. It is to be noted that his followers were mainly of the literate class and not of the common mass. The former were deeply impressed by his simplicity, his faith, and his profound wisdom. Even the leaders of the Brahmo Samaj came to him for inspiration and guidance. Ramakrishna interpreted Hindu religion in a manner which brought back to its followers confidence and self-respect. With his faith and philosophy, Hindus no longer felt apologetic about themselves in the presence of their Christian critics. The Brahmo Samaj had tried to breach the gap between Hinduism and Christianity, but Ramakrishna saw no need of reinterpreting Hinduism in the light of Christianity. His views on the essence of Hinduism and image worship made Hindu religion seem very much broader in scope than had been thought of by the people of that time. According to him, God or the Divine Power was everywhere, vast and incomprehensible. An ordinary man who is not capable of conceiving this Power builds images in the forms in which he wishes and worships Him through the image. Ramakrishna held all religions to be the same and said that they offered various ways of approaching the same God.

Vivekananda interpreted the simple sayings of Ramakrishna in forceful words and added to them his confidence and zest. Vivekananda took the message of Hinduism to the United States of America and his appearance at the Parliament of Religions at Chicago in 1893 brought to India a positian of international respect. The disciples of Ramakrishna formed an order of monks and organized a mission for the performance of social service. Branches of the mission slowly spread throughout India and then through many countries of the world, and these exist and function even today. Vivekananda at first headed this mission. He was very conscious of the common man and the role he ought to play in society. He preached for the upliftment of the masses economically and through education and for the obliteration of caste differences in order to bring about national unity. Although he was not in the political

scene, Swami Vivekananda is looked upon as one of the founders of Indian nationalism as well as a religious leader.[42]

In conclusion we may note that some of the social changes desired in the latter half of the nineteenth century have developed steadily in that direction. Due to the changing socio-economic order of the times many of the desired changes have come about naturally, whereas others have failed to take effect.

Formal education in the Bengali and English languages developed steadily and rapidly. Both primary and higher education became increasingly necessary for the changing economic system, so that today the educational system is taken for granted in the Bengali society, and more and more time is spent by the youth in acquiring a formal education.

Female education has developed as steadily as education for the males. Today little difference exists between the education of the two sexes, especially at the primary level. Higher education for women is also steadily on the increase. At first women's education was a decoration, and it gave a touch of sophistication to the family. Then primary education for women came to be thought of as their natural right especially in their childhood days, and it was felt that it kept the girls well occupied until they were married. As the age of marriage of girls increased, being perhaps the effect of more complex economic forces, the educational life for the girls also increased. Until a suitable match was found girls were given the freedom to attain as much education as they desired and as the family could afford. Until the second world war, however, education as an economic necessity for the girls was not particularly thought of. As women are becoming less and less conspicuous in the occupational world today, and being able to provide for the economic necessities for their families, women's education is no more a decoration or an idle pursuit. Although suitable marriage for girls is still desired and performed, they are given an education to guard them against possible misfortunes.

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[42] Andrews and Mookerjee, *op. cit.*, chapter IV. Also see by Swami Vivekananda, *Modern India* (Almora : Advaita Ashrama, 1923) ; *An Appeal to Young Bengal* (Calcutta : S. C. Mitra & Co., 2nd. ed.) ; and *Teachings of Swami Vivekananda* (Almora ; Advaita Ashrama, 1948).

The social disabilities of the Bengali women are more and more on the decrease. This is, however, more due to their educational and economic freedom, and changing economies of the day than to organized effort. Polygynous marriages have become increasingly uncommon. It has already been mentioned that girls are married at increasingly higher ages. Although the minimum age for the marriage of girls is fourteen by law, few girls are married today at so young an age especially in the cities. Because of the disappearance of polygynous marriages, higher age at marriage, and educational and economic freedom, widowoood is not now the social problem which it used to be in the nineteenth century. However, even a century after the enactment of the remarriage of Hindu widows, such marriages have not yet taken hold of the sentiment of the people. Remarriage of widows is still an occasional event.

Attempts to obliterate caste differences have been made at different epochs by different religious leaders even from the time of Buddha. Instead of obliterating caste. however, these movemens resulted in forming a new religious group which was differentiated from the general Hindu society. In the nineteenth century the Brahmo Samaj similarly preached against caste differences and promoted inter-caste marriages within the Samaj. In favour of recognition of such marriages the Government passed a secular marriage act which sanctioned marriages between individuals on declaration of not being members of any of the recognized religious denominations. Instead of eliminating caste differences, within the Hindu society, therefore, performance of marriages by this Act gave the status to the Brahmos as non-Hindus. Today with the secularization of society, and the greater participation of women outside of the home, marriages based on personal choice are more and more frequent and among these inter-caste marriages are common. Such marriages are sanctioned by the same Act on the same declaration of being non-Hindus. However, as these individuals are members of Hindu society, and this declaration is made only for the purpose of giving legal recognition to the marriage, along with it some of the rituals of Hindu marriages may also be performed to please the sentiments of the couple and their families. It is

to be noted that although inter-caste marriages performed by Hindu rituals alone are not legal, marriages performed in the manner described above are usually accepted by the households. Complete breach between parents and children on account of inter-caste marriage is becoming increasingly rare. This is perhaps an indication of the loosening of the sacred rigours of caste, especially in cities.

The political consciousness which developed in the late nineteenth century led to its culmination in the winning of independence for the country. It may be said that with the introduction of the popular system of government, people are made to think more politically than they were heretofore through the medium of the press, the schools, and the various associations existing for the purpose. Voluntary associations in the last century were formed mainly to promote educational and political interests. Today associations have increased greatly, and especially among the young people, associations for recreational and entertainment purposes are common and expected.

A religious revival has not been seen in the Bengal of the twentieth century. The Brahmo Samaj has steadily declined in force. The Ramakrishna Mission never attempted to organize the religious activities of the people, and today it operates mainly as a social service organization. The religious activities of the Hindus are centred in the households, and the performance of many of the rituals is made easy by the presence of a large number of persons as in the joint households. Today the economic instability and the gradual dispersion of joint families seem to be associated with the performance of many of the religious celebrations by voluntary associations in public places rather than in homes. This process seems to have taken away the sacred aloofness maintained by the traditions of individual households, and given to these ceremonies more the feeling of secular amusement. The majority of educational bodies today give purely secular instruction. The secularization of thought which started in the nineteenth century seems to grow unchecked in the Bengal of today.

THE WEAVERS OF BARPALI:

A STUDY OF THEIR SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONDITION

By NITYANANDA PATNAIK

Barpali, Orissa

Introduction

BARPALI is a village forty miles south-west of Sambalpur town in Orissa. It is widely known in Orissa and in some parts of India for its textiles (principally women's garments) made from silk and cotton yarn. There are four castes of weavers, namely, Kusta, Bhulia, Kuli and Ganda. The following chart shows how they differ from one another in their technical practices as well as in their position in the hierarchy of castes.

	KUSTA		BHULIA	KULI	GANDA
	LARIA	ORIA			
1.	Kill tasar silk insects. spin tasar yarn and weave tasar cloth.	Spin only destroyed tasar cocoons. Do not kill the insects.			
2.	Weave silk cloth.				
3.			Weave cotton yarn cloth.	Weave cotton yarn cloth.	Weave cotton yarn cloth.
4.	Weave colourful designs but inferior to those of the Bhulias.		Famous for their colour and colourful floral, animal and line designs.	Weave ordinary cloth without any design.	Weave ordinary cloth without any design.
5.	Caste Hindus.	Caste Hindus.	Caste Hindus	Considered to be untouchable by the Kustas and Bhulias.	Scheduled caste. Untouchable.

Technique of Weaving

There is little structural difference between the handlooms used by Kusta, Bhulia, Kuli and Ganda weavers. But the Bhulias and the Kustas use various appliances with the loom to help them make the silk or cotton yarn smooth and weave varieties of complicated designs and patterns. A simple loom has the common parts described below.

A cloth is usually made of material which is so soft and pliant that one series of elements has to be kept extended by artificial means while the other series is interwoven with it. The series thus extended is called the warp (*tani*) and the active series which is intertwined is called the weft (*buna*). The warp is attached at the end near the operator to a cloth beam (*thono*), and at the other to a yarn beam. The warp, on the whole, is extended on the frame of the loom (*manga*) and is kept tightly stretched by means of a rope. This rope is tied to the yarn beam at one end and at the other to a firm pillar. The warp is set in a horizontal plane. The cloth beam is kept horizontally motionless by means of two pegs slantingly stuck on the ground and passing through the holes at both the ends of the beam. The operator after weaving a certain length stops and exposes a shorter length of warp from the yarn beam and rolls up the finished cloth upon the cloth beam, and then continues weaving.

There are generally two heddles used in simple looms. The heddles (*boi*) raise or depress each alternate warp strand at the same time. Thus an opening is produced which is called the shed through which the shuttle (*nari*) is shot rapidly with a single motion between these threads and the rest. The heddles used by these weavers are of rod-heald type, consisting of a number of loops usually fastened to two rods, one at the upper surface of the warp and the other below it. Each loop encircles one warp thread, so that when the rod is raised, these warp threads rise with it and a shed is formed. If a heddle is attached to the odd threads of the warp, then the other heddle is attached to the even threads. The heddles are raised up and down by the legs. Two ropes, each attached to one heddle, are hung into the pit (*manga gad*). The weaver who sits at the edge of

the pit hangs his legs down into the pit and by his feet simultaneously pulls the rope attached to the even heddle and releases the other attached to the odd heddle to raise the odd threads and depress the even threads. Thus the mechanism for raising and lowering the heddles is to produce shed and counter-shed for the passage of the weft. To weave floral, animal and various line designs on the side borders and end borders, separate heddles (*fulbadi*) ranging from three to ten in number are used in addition to the two main heddles. In this case the loops of the two main heddles cling to only warp strands of the body of the cloth whereas the loops of those for floral designs encircle the warp threads of the side borders of the cloth. The latter ones are attached according to definite patterns, each raising a different set of warp threads of the side borders as the operator manipulates them. They are raised and depressed by hand. They are hung by means of strings, one end of which is tied to each of the heddle rods in the middle and the other passes round each of the reels serving as pulleys and supported at a height of 3 feet from the surface of the warp. This free end of each string after being passed round the reels is fastened to a heavy object in order to keep the design-heddles hanging and in proper position.

Thus the warp threads of the body of the cloth which the two main heddles are to raise and lower pass through the loops of these reciprocating heddles, whereas those of the side borders which are to remain stationary, pass through the strings of the heddles without being attached to them. There is invariably a shed-stick (*arsal*) of considerable diameter behind all the heddles above the threads of the side borders and below those which pass through the loops of the two reciprocating heddles. This shed-stick is supported horizontally by two forked pegs stuck in the ground. Its function is to keep the threads of the body raised up, thus facilitating shedding the warp widely each time the heddle is raised or depressed. There are also three to four laze-rods (*kami*) of bamboo splits interlacing over and under alternate threads of the warp in order to prevent them from becoming entangled. Each time the heddle is raised or depressed, one pick (*tag*) of the weft is shot through the shed. Each pick of the weft after being shot is beaten up by

a pronged instrument called a comb (*pania*). The strands of the warp pass through the intervening spaces of the teeth of the comb. This comb is fixed in a swinging batten or wooden frame (*hatha*) which swings immediately in front of the two main heddles. The comb is not only used for beating the weft but also further serves to keep the warp threads apart. The number of teeth in the comb also determines the quantity of yarn to be used for the warp. To weave a cloth thickly or thinly depends upon what numbers of teeth are being used for weaving a cloth. If the teeth of the comb are thinly laid the cloth is thinly woven ; whereas if it is thickly laid then it is thickly woven. The shuttle is charged with weft thread by means of pirn (*kanda*). It is shot with the hand by the Bhulia and Kusta weavers, whereas it is shot by the Gandas and Kulis with a mechanism which sticks the shuttle for shooting the weft by the manipulation of the right hand. The Kustas and Bhulias use locally-made light wooden shuttles. This light type of shuttle is convenient for weaving picturesque designs. The use of the hand for shooting leads to slowness in weaving. The slow weaving is again needed when complicated designs are being woven by Bhulias and Kustas.

There is another piece of flat laze-rod (*fulkanda*) interlaced over the warp threads of side borders and under the remaining ones of the body. It is used for designing the end borders. This rod remains flat at ordinary times of weaving. When design weaving for the end border is necessary, it is pushed forward near the heddles and lifted up so that the flat face remains perpendicular to the ground and thus opens widely the warp threads of the body.

The loom is set up at a place always inside the room, some part of which is also used for storing household things and for sleeping. The weavers do not make any part of the loom. They depend upon carpenters for all the parts of the loom except the comb, which is made by Muslims belonging to the district of Puri. They come here regularly every year with the material used for making combs, which they manufacture for the weavers. The material out of which the teeth of the comb is made is not available in this locality. A loom if used with care gives life long

service to a weaver. It is known that a loom is often used for more than one generation.

In addition to the different parts of the loom there are various other appliances used for spinning silk yarn and performing other operations connected with warping and wefting the silk and cotton threads. The appliances used in connection with silk yarn are *natei*, *asari*, *chhai*, *jatur*, *pirn*, *khuchna*, *fundra* and *rahanta*. In case of cotton yarn, all the above appliances are used except *natei*, which is only used in spinning silk yarn. For all these contrivances the weaver needs the help of carpenters. It can be said in brief that the weavers always depend upon carpenters for supplying them with all the parts and appliances connected with the spinning and weaving apparatus.

Some time ago the weavers were making the loop string used in the heddles themselves. But the Kustas, Bhulias, and some Kulis have given up doing so as factory-made heddle loops are now-a-days available in the market. The Kusta and Bhulia weavers say that it is easier to use factory-made heddle strings than making them, which is very laborious. But other Kuli Mehers prefer their own hand-made heddle strings to factory-made ones.

The weavers can easily make their looms if they learn a little bit of carpentry. They can also easily find wood for the loom. But they do not have that knack of learning carpentry and shaping the wood to make a loom.

As this report treats all the four classes of weavers together for comparison purposes, I would better describe the techniques of weaving of the classes of weavers separately, but under the same heading of 'Techniques of Weaving.'

Technique of Weaving of the Kusta Mehers

These weavers get silk cocoons mostly from Chaibasa and Chakradharpur in Singhbhum District in Bihar. As soon as they get the cocoons they steam them at home and kill the silkworms living inside. After the cocoons are steamed, they are spread on the ground outside the house under the sun and dried for a day. If the weavers do not need them for

spinning immediately, they preserve them in gunny bags carefully, so that ants and rats might not do any damage to them. When they are required for spinning, the cocoons are taken out of the bag and boiled. The boiling is done with great care only by women. Steaming the cocoons is also done by women. These two processes are always performed inside the house and with much care. The weavers say that a person who does not belong to their caste may learn all the operations connected with spinning and weaving tasar yarn, but he can neither steam nor boil the cocoons properly. These two processes need a great deal of experience, care and keen observation. The male members of this class of weavers have vague ideas about steaming and boiling cocoons.

After the cocoons are boiled, some ash is spread in one place and a piece of cloth is laid over the ash. Then the boiled cocoons are kept over this piece of cloth for some time, so that the remaining water in the cocoons is soaked up by the ash spread under the cloth. After a while the cocoons are placed inside an eathen vessel with the harder ones below and the softer ones above. They are now ready for spinning. Spinning is always done by women. We have seen even girls of five to seven years of age spinning along with elderly women. The appropriate time for spinning is the afternoon. If one happens to pass through a lane of Kusta weavers in the afternoon, he is sure to see a large number of little girls and aged women spinning outside their houses on their respective verandahs.

It is a scene worth seeing. A woman sits with both her legs stretched, and the right leg is laid on the left one. On her left she keeps six boiled cocoons separately on a flat wooden basin and a water pot. She takes out six threads one from each cocoon and joins them and makes one united thread which she rolls on her left thigh by means of her left hand. This whole process is continuous. She goes on winding the *natei* as the six threads come out of the cocoons and are twisted into one on the left thigh by the left hand. The threads at the point of their union on the thigh are always kept wet by water from the waterpot. After the given number of cocoons has been spun and wound round a *natei* or more than one

natei, the *nateis* with the threads round them are kept under water for a whole night. These threads are now ready for warping and wefting. In case of warping, the threads are brought to a wooden frame called *jantur* by a woman. This operation is done outside the house and in the morning. The woman sits on a stool and keeps the frame on her right side. The *nateis* are kept standing, but in a slightly slanting position by securing the handles in the holes bored through a piece of stone known as *khuchna*.

The threads from each *natei* are brought together and passed through a small bamboo tube. The woman holds this bamboo tube in her right hand and a piece of smooth, fine reed in her left hand. She then passes the bamboo tube round the pegs of the *jantur*, so that the threads coming together from the *nateis* pass over the reed held in the left hand and round the pegs. The reason why the reed is held in the left hand is to protect the hand from being cut by the threads. The threads are passed through the bamboo tube, which is lined with porcelain. This is to make them smooth. The *jantur* possesses eight pegs on the whole, four on one side and four on the other. The operator goes on passing the threads round her nearest peg to the farthest one, and comes back to the nearest peg again. She counts one as she starts from the nearest peg to the farthest one and comes back where she started. Thus she goes on counting up to sixty, when she ties the threads of 60 rounds at the nearest peg with a piece of ordinary thread.

Threads of 60 round, i.e., 60 pairs of threads make what is known as *punja*. For a given width of piece-goods, a required number of *punjas* is always necessary, because on the number of *punjas* of threads the operator determines what would be the width of the cloth to be woven and the length of the comb needed for weaving this cloth. After a required number of *punjas* of warp threads has been passed round the *jantur*, this operation is stopped. These warp strands are then tied with the threads already passing through the comb. When a new comb is used, the warp strands are newly passed through the comb and then the heddles are fixed to them. In order to avoid this laborious process of passing the warp strands through the comb, the operator

after weaving the cloth, cuts it in such a way that he takes the cloth out of the loom and lets the end threads project through the comb. When another set of warp is ready and if this comb is necessary to weave this cloth, the warp strands are only tied one after another with the strands already running through the comb. After the strands are tied with those on the comb, the strands are dipped into a solution of polished rice (*arua* rice). When it is taken out of the solution, it is kept between layers of ash, but separated from it by layers of cloth. The idea of keeping the threads between layers of ash is to absorb water.

Next morning the warp strands are stretched horizontally outside in an open space, and are brushed thoroughly several times. Before brushing, a solution of rice water, cooked with some pulverized *arua* rice, is applied to the strands which afterwards are brushed with what is known as a *kuchi*. After the strands are brushed, the whole thing is wrapped up. The laze rods of bamboo splits are interlaced over and under alternate threads at the time of rolling the strands. Then the strands are brought in and set in the loom.

In case of weft threads the process is different. After the threads are spun on the *natei*, they are wound round another appliance called *asari*. From *asari* the threads are taken out and tied at two or three places so that the threads may not be dishevelled. These threads are kept immersed under water in some basin for a night and next morning they are washed thoroughly. Then the threads are dried and put in a contrivance known as *chhati*. The threads are somewhat disordered and dishevelled. In order to make them regular, the threads from the *chhati* are again rolled round the *asari* and then wound round the pirn (*kanda*) by means of a spinning wheel called *rahanta*. The pirns are set in the shuttles which are shot through the shed of the warp. In weaving the two series of pliable elements, the warp and weft are interlaced at right angles to form a fabric more or less dense, according to the materials and the *punja* of warp used.

So far as the process of warping and wefting in the case of cotton yarn is concerned, it is more or less the same as practised with silk yarn. In the former case, it is much simpler. The hanks are first put in a swift called *ufurna*. From this appliance

the threads are taken to *asari*, from which then the threads are taken to *jantur* similarly as the silk threads are taken to prepare for the warp. Then these warp threads are tied to those already passed through the comb and are then stretched for brushing purposes. After brushing is over the warp is set in the loom. The making of the weft is easy. A hank of yarn is first set in *ufurna*. Then the threads from *ufurna* are wound regularly round the *asari*. From it they are brought to *kanda* by means of a spinning wheel. When the threads are not necessary to wind round the *kanda*, they are directly wound round a stick known as *tarara* from the *ufurna*.

Dyeing

Twenty years ago the cloths were not dyed blue, green, yellow, red, etc , as they are now. Then the cloths, were white, but the side and end borders were dyed red and black. The threads of the borders were dyed red and black and the old designs were woven into them. The red and black colours were obtained from plants which were available in this locality in abundance. The plant which is used for getting black is known as *nili*. In order to prepare the black colour, the plants were uprooted and brought home, and they were chopped into pieces and steeped in water. Sufficient time was given for the water to absorb the black sap of the plants. Then the plants were taken out of the water. A solid block of what is called *gitti* purchased from the market was put in the same water and allowed to dissolve in it. Then the yarn to be dyed was put in this black solution and kept immersed until the yarn caught the colour.

For dying deep red the bark of the roots of a tree known as *achha* is necessary. The barks are collected and pounded by mortar and pestle. The pounded barks are put in water while it is boiling. Then a solution known as *dholo* obtained from the market is added the pounded barks. In this solution the yarn to be dyed is put and kept immersed until next day when some soda and castor oil are added, and again the whole thing is boiled.

When the factory colours of blue, green, red, and chocolate, etc., were available, one Mr. Bhattacharya, a Bengali gentleman,

opened a shop of these various colours and taught the people how to dye yarn with them. The cloths woven from yarn dyed with these colours attracted much attention. In the beginning, for six to eight years, no change took place in design though the colour of the cloths changed from white to blue, green, and red, etc. In course of time two or three handloom factories were opened at Tusura (Bolangir-Patna), Jharmunda (Sambalpur), and Tora (Bargarh) and cloths were woven in large numbers. The factory authorities had to change the old Sambalpuri designs to various modern designs according to the taste of the customers. Cloths of various attractive colours and of several modern designs came to be generally preferred to those with white background and borders of old designs. Introduction of colour which consequently changed the traditional design of borders of cloth, brought about the ruin of old designs and the simple taste of the people. When the weavers found the process of dying yarn with factory colour to be much easier and simpler, they gave up dying with vegetable colours. Even now-a-days some good weavers think of colour culture from the local plants, but at the next moment they give up the idea in view of the laborious process involved.

The process of dying blue, green, etc., is as follows. The yarns are first boiled and then washed in cold water thoroughly. Then they are rinsed well so that they are free from water. These rinsed yarns are now ready for dying. First of all some measured quantity of water is boiled. In the boiled water the following ingredients are put in order according to measured quantity given below and stirred thoroughly.

Caustic—21 *tolas* in the case of blue and 24 *tolas* in the case of green.

Colour—7 *tolas* in the case of blue and 8 *tolas* in the case of green.

Hydrosulphate—21 *tolas* in the case of blue and 24 *tolas* for green.

Primatax—4 teaspoonsful.

In this solution the yarns are immersed and kept until the

colour is fixed. It takes only ten minutes, after which they are taken out and rinsed and dried in the sun.

The Bhulias are expert in dyeing black. All the other weavers, Kusta, Kuli, etc., give their yarn to Bhulias for the purpose of dyeing in black. The Bhulias charge six annas for dyeing 3 *tolas* of yarn. The process by which they dye black is this. First of all some water with seeds of a plant called *chakhata* is boiled. In the boiled water some soda and then the black colour purchased from the market is added. In this solution, the yarns are dipped and a piece of lemon is squeezed into it. After a while the yarns are taken out of the solution and washed in fresh water thoroughly. This process of dipping the yarn in the solution and squeezing the lemon is repeated five to six times, which means that it takes five to six days to dye the yarn black. They do not throw away the solution after the operation is over. They say that the more the solution is used and the more is it decomposed, the better it is for dying.

27 JUN 1958

THE GRANARIES AT HARAPPA

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Introduction

VATS (1940) has identified a few masonry structures as granaries at Harappa of which the Great Granary has been the biggest one of its kind. Granaries have not been reported from any other site in the Indus Valley and as such an attempt has been made in the present paper to find out how far the masonry structures of Harappa fit in with our present ideas about granaries as found among primitive and civilized peoples in northern India. Vats has described five granaries, these have been found to be circular, cylindrical and rectangular. There are inscriptional and literary references about granaries in ancient India but nothing is known of their shape and size. The Sohagaura Copper Plaque Inscription and Mahasthan Fragmentary Stone Plaque Inscription of the 3rd. century B. C. (Sircar, 1942) contain references to granaries. The former has two representations of huts which scholars have taken to be granaries (Cf. Plate facing p. 510, *J.R.A.S.* 1907).

TABLE 1

S. No.	Area	Stratum	Trench	Internal measurements	Height	Shape	Text Plate	Reference
1	Mound F	I	VI	8′1″ (Diam.)	8′1″	Circular	XXVIII	Vats (1940) p. 122
2	do.	I	VI	Not given		do.	do.	do.
3	do.	III	IV	Not given		Cylindrical	XI	p. 56
4	do.	III	I	8′4″ × 2′5″	5′7″	Rectangular	Not given	p. 91
5	Mound AB	II		4′2″ (diam.)	6′	Circular	XXXd	p. 188

Description of the Granaries of Harappa

Out of the five granaries described by Vats four have been discovered in Mound F and one in Mound AB. They belong to different strata and their sizes also differ as shown in Table 1 above :

Granaries 1 and 2 belong to the same Trench and in the same square (0 10/24). Stratum I in Trench VI is represented by these two structures and a few fragmentary walls. The granaries are situated close to Rooms Nos. 9, 10, 11 of House No. I of Stratum IV and are poorly represented in the photographs. No measurements of Granary 2 have been given. No. I survives to a height of 3′3″ and there is no mention regarding the air passages or doors so essential for a granary. Grain has not been found from Stratum I of Mound F, in fact it has not yielded any remains of masonry structure worthy to be called a house.

Granary 3 (Plate XI) is situated in front of House 4 (Workmen's Quarters) of Stratum IV, and no notable structure of Stratum III to which the Granary 3 belongs has been brought to light in Tr. IV. It is described as cylindrical and no measurement of this structure has been given. It is thus difficult to distinguish between a circular and cylindrical granary.

Granary 4 has been described as 'a hollow rectangular shaft, measuring 2′ 4″ by 2′ 5″ internally, which stands to a height of 5′ 7″ and was probably used as a granary. Its walls are only half a brick in thickness, being constructed entirely of courses laid stretcherwise'. It is built upon a drain belonging to the 7th or 8th Stratum. Close to this granary have been laid bare two large jars (Nos. 1033 A and B) connected with a pavement (Pl. XXIII a). One of these two jars contained animal bones and charred wheat. Both the pavement and the structure identified as granary belong to the 3rd Stratum. It appears from the plan and section of this Trench I (Plate XXI) that the above two jars connected with the pavement probably belonged to a wayside watering station and in view of the rectangular nature of the structure having no doors or air-holes, it looks more like a garbage pit than a granary.

Granary 5 is the only structure of its kind in Mound AB. Plate XXXI shows prominently a structure raised straight from the ground like a huge tube. About 40′ south of this structure has been discovered a square brick platform on which was found a large earthenware bowl. It appears from the Report that Granary 5 belongs to the 2nd Stratum, but the plan and section (Pl. XXIX) point definitely to Stratum I., A pile of animal bones was found near this granary. Granaries have a sanctity attached to them in present day India and it appears unlikely that it will be built nearly a refuse dump. In this case too our previous identification of garbage pit fits in well with the structure.

The Great Granary at Harappa

The Great Granary, which measures 168′ from north to south by 135′ from east to west is the most outstanding discovery at Harappa. The discovery of a citadel wall at Harappa by Wheeler (1947) has added great importance to it. Marshall has pointed out that one of the granaries attached to the Roman Forts in England has a striking resemblance to the Great Harappa Granary. The presence of air-holes at the base of the parallel walls all the more supports the view that the structure was a granary. Air-holes are the most important characteristic of granaries even at the present day, and the absence of this fundamental character in the above five granaries described by Vats leads one to the view that the masonry structures are in all likelihood not granaries. The present author is of opinion that they are garbage pits and their locations described above further strengthen this view.

Modern Granaries in India

Granaries meant for storing food-grains are wide-spread all over India. They are either circular or rectangular in shape and are always built on raised platforms to keep away rodents. In modern times they are generally built within the same compound as a dwelling house, although instances are not rare where they are built on the outskirts of the village.

Granaries are also built by the aborigines of north-eastern India for storing food-grains. The Sema and Lhota Nagas

build granaries generally outside the village for security against fire. Sometimes they are built closer to the dwelling houses for fear of theft. Generally, all the granaries of a village stand outside the village in neat little groups. The Abors and Galongs (1915) also built granaries outside the village. Peal (1895) mentions such granaries 'not only all round Assam, down the Peninsula and over the Malaya Archipelago, but even as far as Papua, Formosa and Polynesia'. Hutton (1921) describes Sema granaries 'as miniature houses in rows but raised from the ground'. The Lhota granaries (Mills, 1922) are also raised on posts above the ground. The Abors (Peal, 1896) build their granaries 6 or 7 ft. above the ground. Granaries in Bengal are raised from the ground. They are generally built of mud and bamboo with thatched roofs. The floor of the granary is built of strong bamboo wickerwork which lets in air for the grains. The granaries of Eastern India more or less conform to the aboriginal pattern. The sacred nature of the granary may also be gathered from the various superstitions and rites connected with it. Balfour (1885) mentions Indian granaries as underground pits in which grain is stored.[1] In Bengal even to this day grains are preserved in underground jars under the floor of a house. It appears to be similar to the Cretan floor-cists or Kaselles (Evans, 1921).

Conclusion

It will be thus seen that the five masonry structures found at Harappa do not conform to the fundamental nature typical of granaries, since they have neither the characteristic air-holes nor are they raised above the ground, and in view of their location near drains, watering places or piles of animal bones, they appear to be more of the nature of garbage pits than granaries. Both at Knossos and Phaestos (Evans, 1921) walled pits were specially constructed for the reception of rubbish. Granaries in modern India, among both civilized and uncivilized peoples, are held sacred and associated with strict taboos.

[1] Rectangular pit-granaries, completely plastered over with mud, are in use in places like Berhampore or Ganjam for storing paddy after it is harvested. The grains are taken out before the rains set in. They are built in the open space in front of a house.—Editor.

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A NOTE ON RAIN-MAKING RITES

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NUMEROUS are the folk rites observed in different parts of India for causing rain. In this paper an attempt has been made to describe a few of such rain-making rites with particular reference to a rite observed by girls in Bengal, popularly called ***Punya-pukur-vrata*** which is in essence a rain-making rite. ***Punya*** means religious merit or sacredness or holiness, and ***pukur*** is a tank or pond. As this rite is observed in a miniature tank, it is called ***Punya-pukur-vrata***, or the rite of the sacred tank.

This rite is inaugurated on the last day of the month of *Chaitra* (*Chaitra-sankranti*) and observed throughout the whole month of ***Vaisakha***. The articles required for its performance consist of white flowers, sandal-wood paste (***chandana***), ***durva***-grass and a pot of water drawn from the Ganges or from any other river. In the courtyard or on the bank of a pond or in a garden a miniature tank is dug and four ***ghatas*** (earthen vessels) are placed on the steps at the four sides. In certain places (Burdwan and Vikrampur) the measurement of the tank is one cubit square. The sides of the ***ghatas*** are decorated with cowrie shells. In the centre of the tank a *tulasi* plant (*Ocymum* ***sanctum***) and a branch of the ***bilva*** tree (***Aegle marmelos***) are planted. Sitting with the face to the east or to the north the observer pours down water from an earthen pot on the plants. ***Durva***-grass, sandal-wood paste, flowers, etc., are offered to the tank along with the chanting of ***chhadas*** or ritual poems. This pouring down of water with offering of flowers is made thrice, after which the observer makes an obeisance. In some places in the district of Burdwan, ***naivedya*** (offering consisting of sun-dried rice, plantain, sweets, etc.), is made to frogs. This rite is consummated after four years' continuous observance. On the day of completion a Brahmin or alternately four Brahmins are feasted and presented with a golden

bilva-fruit and proper presents or *dakshina*. One *kahan* (16 *panas* or 1820 cowries) of cowrie shells is also offered to the brother of the observer. As a merit of the observance of the rite, the observer secures immunity from all kinds of sorrows and difficulties. The merits of the rite are described in the *chhadas* which are chanted at the time of offering water, flowers, etc.

To a casual observer this rite appears to be simply a worship of the *tulasi* plant and the *bilva* branch along with the offering of flowers and pouring down of water. But a critical analysis of the rituals reveals that the observance is a form of sympathetic magical rite performed to cause rain and thereby to protect plants from dying and for filling the tanks with water.

This rite is observed in the month of *Vaisakha* when ponds dry up and plants wither, due to drought. It is, therefore, likely that this rite evolved out of the ordinary human desire of drawing water from clouds so that trees and plants may not die and ponds and tanks may not go dry. This becomes clear from the *Vasundhara-Vrata Chhada* :

> *Kal Vaisakhi* ! fire burning,
> *Kal Vaisakhi* ! burns the sun,
> Ganges about to be dried up
> And ashes in the sky.

This also explains the significance of planting twigs in the centre of the tank and pouring down water on the plants. A similar rite of pouring water is the *Vasundhara Vrata.* Whenever there are difficulties due to drought, when all plants and leaves wither, the girls are not satisfied simply by intimating their desire to the Lord but on the other hand they actually perform a magical rite to cause rain. They conceive the earthen pots to be clouds and the pouring down of water from the pot to be the showering of rain.

Many rites are observed in different parts of India to cause rain in times of drought. In Sylhet women perform several rites to cause rain, of which mention may be made of (a) burying in the ground a quantity of salt acquired by begging ; (b) burying the nest of a crow under water ; (c) frog-marriage ; (d) throwing

of Siva *linga* in water, as well as paper and leaves.[1] The Kunbis of western India go from door to door invoking rain, and the owner of each house showers water on them along with curd, butter, etc.[2] In the Punjab (Attock District) boys and girls collect together and dress two dolls as man and woman, and then observe a rite for causing rain. They all say, '*guddi gudda margia*'. Then they burn them and lament their death saying :

Dolls we burnt to ashes down,
Black cloud ; soon comes down
Dolls well we bewailed,
Do, while rain set in ;
Stones black and pebbles white,
Cloud (rain) falls near the village.[3]

In U. P. a festival is observed in which girls go to the tank and after making offerings to water, they divide themselves into two groups, a groom's party and bride's and then they walk round a *tulasi* and a *pipal* tree. This rite is intended for fertility and for causing rain as well.[4] The Garos in order to have rain pour down water on their priest along with the chanting of spells ; the priest is also beaten at the same time.[5] In Kumaun when the rain fails they dig a five-foot trench and make a *Yogi* or a Brahmin ascetic sit in it.[6] The Parbha Bhils (jungle tribe of Khandesh) plant a branch of the *Kadamba* tree (*Nanclea parvifolia*) and smear it with vermilion and dance round it during the night ; in the morning they throw it into water.[7] The Parjas also pour water on a pile of wood for the same purpose.[8] There are many other similar rites for causing rain in different parts of India.

The above citations show that some rites dealing with water, tank or pouring down water on plants, etc. are performed with a

[1] *Man in India*, Vol. X, p. 127.
[2] *Indian Antiquary*, 1911. pp. 1-36.
[3] Rose, *Glossary of the Tribes and Castes of the Punjab and N. W. Province* p. 328.
[4] *North Indian Notes and Queries*, Vol. III. p. 184.
[5] Playfair, *The Garos*, p. 88.
[6] *North Indian Notes and Queries*, Vol. III. p. 184.
[7] *Bombay Gazetteer*, Vol. XIII. p. 200.
[8] Russel, *Tribes and Castes of Central Provinces*, Vol. III. p. 377.

view to drawing water on the earth from the clouds above. It is to be noted that the planting of saplings, digging of tanks, and pouring down of water are almost invariable items of rituals everywhere. All these are associated with causing rain and therefore to save plant and tank from being dried up.

That the rite in Bengal is particularly observed for rain-making becomes also clear from the offering made to the frog. Since the frog is intimately associated with rain and rain water, offering of *naivdya* to it is very significant.

Even in the Rigveda we find praises of the *Mandukas* or cloud frogs with those of India.[9] In the Atharvaveda the frog is considered to be a symbol of rain and preventive against fire.[10] In Egypt Hekt, wife of Khnum, is a frog goddess and a moon deity. Similarly in India the frog is considered to be a friend of *Indu* or the moon.[11]

Even today the frog or the toad is regarded as the custodian of rain. Some Indians of Orinoco keep a frog in a pot, beat it with a rod whenever there is drought, and some again believe that the killing of the frog will be followed by rain.[12] Some people of the lower castes in the Central Provinces tie a frog to a rod, cover it with leaves and branches and then carry it from house to house singing,

> Send soon, oh Frog ! Jewel of water,
> And ripen the wheat and millet in the field.

Similarly the Kapu women in Madras catch a frog and tie it to a new winnowing fan and then go from door to door singing,

> Lady frog must have her bath,
> Oh Rain God ! give a little water for her at least.

While singing, the women of the household pour water upon the frog. They believe that by doing so they will be able to

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[9] Forlang, *Faiths of Man*, Vol. II. p. 121.

[10] Bloomfield, *Atharvaveda*, pp. 65, 80.

[11] Forlang, *Faiths of Man*, Vol. II, p. 121.

[12] Frazer, *Golden Bough* (abridged ed.). p. 73 ; *Journal of the Bihar & Orissa Research Society*, Vol. XIV, pp. 480-81.

cause rain.[13] Similarly, the Newars of Nepal worship the frog and sing,

> I pray to you to receive these offerings ;
> Send us timely rain and bless our crops.[14]

The Korkus as well fling water on the frog which is carried from door to door.[15] Some of the lower caste women of Bengal often place a frog in a pot full of water in order to have rain.[16] In Assam women perform the ceremony of frog-marriage in order to get rain.[17] Two frogs are caught, one male and the other female, and a mock marriage is celebrated by moving the female one seven times round the male. This is followed by singing and dancing by women.[18] By performing the frog marriage ceremony it is be- leived that the gods will be pleased to cause rain. There is also a similar reference in a Puranic story to the marriage of a frog for bringing down rain.

It is thus clear that the frog plays an important role in the rites performed for causing rain. In fact the people all over the world believe the frog to be a custodian of rain.[19] In India the Hindus believe Indra to be the rain god and the frog to be his associate. In the Vrata rite of Bengal we simply find offering of ***naivedya*** to the frog after the performance of the rite. It is quite likely here too a certain association with rain-making cannot altogether be ruled out. When we consider the ritual of the pouring down of water on the plants and into the tank, it becomes clearer still that the girls by going through these

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[13] Frazer, ***Magic and Religion***, p, 119.

[14] ***Indian Antiquary***, Vol. XXII, p. 292.

[15] Russel and Hiralal, ***Tribes and Castes of Central Provinces***, Vol. III, p. 562.

[16] ***Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal***, Vol. LXXI, p. 39.

[17] ***Man in India***, Vol. VII, pp. 210-11.

[18] ***Ibid***, Vol. X, p. 127. In the Naga Hills Dr. Hutton observed the carving of frogs. See ***Memoirs of the Asiatic Society of Bengal***, Vol. XI, No 1, pp. 30-32. Some primitive tribes like the Kachins think that the eclipse is caused when frogs eat up the sun and the moon. See Hanson, ***Kachins***, p. 119.

[19] ***Man in India***, Vol. VII, pp. 210-11.

rituals desire to have rain to enliven the plants and fill the tanks. Thus what the girls of Bengal do is actually sympathetic magic. But this original character of the rite has been completely modified. Neither in the *chhadas* nor in the *kathas* of the present day rites do we find any hint as to their original primitive character. But a critical analysis of the ritual practices proves the magical significance of the rite observed for rain-making.

SOME ASPECTS OF CHANGE IN BHUMIJ RELIGION IN SOUTH MANBHUM, BIHAR

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SIR H. H. Risley, in *The People of India*, describes the case of the Bhumijes of Manbhum as a typical one in which an entire tribe has been transformed into a Hindu caste, when they have even given up their original dialect and embraced the Bengali language instead. He writes, 'Here a pure Dravidian race have lost their original language and now speak only Bengali; they worship Hindu gods in addition to their own (the tendency being to relegate the tribal gods to the women) and the more advanced among them employ Brahmans as family priests. They still retain a set of totemistic exogamous sub-divisions closely resembling those of the Mundas and Santals. But they are beginning to forget the totems which the names of the sub-divisions denote, and the names themselves will probably soon be abandoned in favour of more aristrocratic designations. The tribe will then have become a caste in the full sense of the word and will go stripping itself of all customs likely to betray its true descent'[1].

In his *Tribes and Castes of Bengal*, Risley has also given a sketchy generalised account of the culture of the Bhumijes. Following his predecessor, Colonel Dalton, Risley identified the Bhumij as a Hinduised branch of the Mundas, who subsequently became acculturated after coming into contact with Bengali Hindu immigrants.

The present writer undertook an investigation of this process of acculturation by field observation.

Field Investigation

In the Census Report of 1941, we find that out of 98,300 Bhumijes living in Manbhum 98,274 (i.e, 99·9%) live in the Sadar

[1] Risley, Sir Herbert, *The People of India.* Calcutta, 1915 p. 75.

Subdivision. In the Sadar Subdivision, again, the Bhumijes have the maximum concentration in its south-western portion, namely, in the Chandil, Baghmundi, Ichagarh, Patamda, Balarampur and Barabhum police stations. After a preliminary reconnoitre in the above areas in June 1950, a village named Madhupur in Chandil P. S. was selected for intensive survey. The writer stayed in the village, more or less continuously, for a year since August 1950. Later on, for comparative surveys, short term investigations were carried out for about six months in various regions beginning from Khunti in Ranchi towards the east in the hope of discovering the steps of transition between pure tribal Mundari culture and that of the Hinduised Bhumijes of South Manbhum. In the present essay, however, we have restricted our observations mainly to the findings in and about the village of Madhupur in Chandil police station in Manbhum.

Magico-religious Life

In the Census Report of 1931 we find the entire Bhumij population of Manbhum described as Hindu. In the course of my stay in this area I too found the Bhumij regarding himself as a Hindu, employing Brahmin priests in marriage and ***sraddha*** ceremonies. The neighbouring Hindu communities also regard them as Hindus, though their exact status in the caste hierarchy is not very well defined. This does not necessarily mean that the Bhumijes have fully assimilated the essential elements of Hinduism and completely shed all elements of their original tribal religion.

Before we take up the analysis of the result of impact between tribal Mundari religion and Bengali Hinduism, let us try to define the essential features of the two cultures :

Tribal Mundari Religion	*Bengali Hinduism*
1. The deities worshipped are mostly the presiding deities of different aspects of physical nature, namely, forests, hills, streams, the sun etc.	1. Though the worship of presiding deities of some aspects of physical nature is present, the most important deities are regarded as emblems of superior moral quaiities.
2. Idolatry is absent and anthropomorphism is ill-developed.	2. Image worship and anthropomorphism are predominant.

3. The deities are regarded as powerful beings but not always moral beings.	3. The important Hindu deities are also regarded as guardians of moral qualities.
4. Religious pursuits are wholly concerned with happiness in this life and there is no belief in heaven, hell or in the Doctrine of Karma.	4. The Doctrine of Karma and the concepts of heaven and hell are essential features of Hinduism.

(*a*) *General concept of Supernaturalism*

A close examination of the annual cycle of activities makes it clear that the people believe that supernatural forces (both spirits and impersonal powers) considerably influence the destiny of all beings on earth in most of their activities. These supernatural forces are mostly considered to be spiritual beings ; but the concept of magically potent objects is not rare. The supernatural spirits are generally invisible but can take any visible form if they wish to. They can travel to any place within a moment and enter into any object. These spirits are credited with human emotions and wishes and are supposed not to possess any moral scruples.

Some of these spirits are generally beneficial to men if people conform to their wishes. Dharam Deota, Durga, 'Siva, Goram Deota, Ganesh, Lakshmi etc. fall under this category. But some of the spirits are notorious for their mischievous propensities, namely, Baram Bhuts, Churkins, Dakins, Jugins etc. Manasa-ma and Kali-ma are regarded with some fear, but they prove beneficial if proper prayers and sacrifices are offered to them.

The recognition of supernatural interference is particularly strong in connection with the major economic operations and in diseases. This is particularly so, because in these matters mere technological control often fails to bring about the desired result. In the cultivation of paddy, beginning from the first ploughing to garnering, each stage is coloured by magico-religious rites. In the main social rites, such as birth, marriage and funeral, magico-religious activities play a significant role. The general attitude to the deities is one of awe and wonder due to their superior powers ; but with regard to the village tutelary deities, they seem to possess also a sentiment akin to kinship bond.

The typical characteristic of Hinduism, namely, connection of supernaturalism with moral behaviour, does not play any significant role in the life of the average Bhumij as yet. To him magico-religious rites are mostly concerned with purely utilitarian considerations. Supernaturalism does not infuse in him the call for moral upliftment to any considerable degree. Only a very small minority of intellectuals among them who have gained acquaintance with Hindu religious literature through Brahmins, Vaishnavas and sadhus have been attracted to the cults of devotion and virtue.

(*b*) *The deities and their functions*

Hinduism has left its triumphant impress upon the names of deities worshipped by the Bhumij in this area.

The writer examined 40 informants (20 male and 20 female) belonging to all social and economic classes and found that they invariably knew the names of the following Hindu gods and goddesses : Siva, Durga, Kali, Manasa, Saraswati, Lakhsmi, Ṣri Krishna, Rama, Jagannath, Ganesa and Bhagaban. All of them have seen the images of Durga, Kali, Manasa, Lakhsmi, Saraswati and Ganesa. But when asked to describe the forms of the above deities most of the informants gave a confused picture. None of them could give a satisfactory explanation as to why an image is made and subsequently immersed in water. These indicate that idolatry as a national tradition has not yet gone deep into their mind. Regarding the qualities and functions of the deities represented by idols, the conception of the average Bhumij does not conform to the Hindu theological concepts very much. These deities are regarded merely as powerful spirits whose aid is to be invoked for personal benefit, either to avert diseases or other mishaps, or for the acquisition of wealth. 38 out of 40 of the informants were not conscious that the deities are associated with moral qualities. Besides the incorporated Hindu deities, the Bhumijes have also maintained a few of their traditional deities. The most important spirits of the latter kind are the village tutelary deities, the Jaher Buri and Dessauli or Goram. Another important deity is Dharam Deota. Whereas the function of Goram Deota is quite clear, the function of Dharam Deota appears to be

a little vague. There is reason to suspect that it is the same as Sing Bonga (Sun-god or Supreme Being) of the Hos and the Mundas. Gobardhan Sing of Bhangat Tola (aged 60 years) told me that Dharam Deota resides in the sun and he is to be worshipped with sweets, white cock or white goat. Among the Mundas, too, Sing Bonga has to be offered fowl or goats of a white colour. It appears that since the suffix Bonga indicates their non-Hindu affiliation the Bhumijes have replaced Sing Bonga by a term acceptable to the Hindus. Why the particular term Dharam was chosen is not known. It is interesting to note that Baneswar Sing of Bhangat Tola said that Dharam Deota is the guardian of religiousness, for, the aid of Dharam is invoked by the Bhumij in almost every magico-religious rite, 'Oh Dharam, you be the witness'. The Bhumijes of Madhupur worship certain local spirits indicating the essential tribal character of their religion. These are, some presiding deities of hills (like Parsa Pat, Jambira Pat, Mandira Pat), Badri Deota (presiding deity of the animals and birds of the forest), Bankuanri (goddess of the forest), Bhangat Kudra (spiritual watchman of the village residing in the Bhangat Kudra hillock). All the deities mentioned above are generally regarded as beneficient, but certain spirits are accredited with inherent proneness for mischiefs; these are known as Bhuts, Dakins, Jugins and Churkins. Most of these spirits represent the departed souls of people who died an abnormal death, like molestation by wild animals, snake bite, suicide, death in a pregnant condition, and so on. It is to be noted that the Bengali Hindu immigrants also brought with them similar beliefs in mischievous spirits. As a result, the original Mundari belief has been maintained practically unaltered; only Bengali terms have been added on to the old ones.

Two very important deities typical of the Mundas, namely, Marang Buru and Burha Burhi (ancestral spirits) do not hold ground among most of the Bhumijes of Madhupur today. Marang Buru is the most important deity of the local non-Hindu Santals and occasionally cows are sacrificed to Marang Buru. Bhumijes coming under the fold of Hinduism feel that the worship of Marang Buru will identify them with the non-Hindu and socially inferior Santals. Even then, a few families still include

the name of Marang Buru in their pantheon when prayers are offered. The worship of Burha Burhi was common even two generations ago. This ancestor worship has disappeared with the gradual decay of the custom of calling back the soul (*roa daka*) after death. Burha Burhi, the male and female ancestral spirits, lived in the kitchen portion of the room known as *bhitarghar*. This custom is incompatible with the Hindu *sraddha* ceremony, with the associated rite of *pindadan*. So, with widespread acceptance of Hindu *sraddha* ceremony and consequent giving up of *roa daka*, the deities gradually lost their place in the pantheon. But even today in the somewhat interior areas at the foot of the Dalma hills, *roa daka* and the worship of Burha Burhi continues to be in vogue among many families.

It is important to note that my informants invariably felt shy of admitting the names of local non-Hindu deities like Jaher Buri, Dessauli, Burha Burhi etc. while they mentioned the name of Siva, Durga, Kali and Manasa with pride. In fact the village headman and some of his associates in Madhupur never admitted the existence of village tutelary deities during the first month of my stay with them.

Let us now turn our attention to the conception of the Supreme Being. The national god, Sing Bonga, has been superseded a long while ago, and today Bhagaban is regarded as the Supreme Being pervading the entire universe. He created the universe and all forms of life. But a good deal of vagueness and controversy persists with regard to the seat, form and function of Bhagaban.

It is interesting to reconstruct the probable stages through which idolatry, a typical trait of Hinduism, could gain so easy and widespread an acceptance among the Bhumijes who were in all probability not idol worshippers in the beginning.

In their purely animistic stage, the Bhumij probably conceived his nature deities in the forms in which they appeared to the naked eye (even today they dream of the presiding deities of hills in the shape of hills). Though a human form was not attributed to these deities they were supposed to possess human passions and motives. When the Bhumijes became acquainted with Hindu images, their first reaction was probably that the idols

themselves were the permanent seats of these images. They could not understand the symbolism of idol worship, nor could they follow why the image is to be drowned after worship. The practice of worshipping the deities with prayers, spells and food articles came very near to their own tribal practices. They conceived the quality of the images exactly in terms of their own deities and gradually became accustomed to invoke their aid in averting dangers. In course of time they heard about the underlying symbolism of image worship from wandering sadhus and Brahmin priests.

We may thus say that the deities worshipped by the Bhumijes of Madhupur and neighbouring areas indicate that :

1. The major Hindu deities have been accepted in the Bhumij pantheon, but to the average Bhumij they conform to their original idea about deities as merely powerful, non-moral beings.

2. The old national deities who compete with parallel deities in the Hindu pantheon have been gradually superseded by corresponding Hindu deities ; Bhagaban replacing Sing Bonga, Barun replacing the water god Nagera Bonga and so on.

3. The village tutelary deities, namely, Dessauli, Jaher Buri etc., and the deities of jungles and hills still perist in their culture, for, the invocation of their aid in major economic operations is considered essential. These deities have also no parallel Hindu deities to compete with. But the people are shy of declaring their custom of worshipping these deities in the presence of outsiders.

(*c*) *Concept of soul*

In typical Mundari religion, the concept of the soul is not burdened with the thought of heaven or hell or the Doctrine of Karma. A few days after death, the spirit of the departed is called back to the *Adding* (sacred tabernacle) by the *roa daka* ceremony. Here the soul combines with the ancestral spirts *Ora Bongas.* Only in the case of unnatural death, like deaths due to epidemic diseases (smallpox or cholera), snake bite etc., the soul is considered to become revengeful and dangerous and is not called back. These souls are transformed into evil spirits like Baram, Bhut, Dakin, Churin etc.

Among the Bhumijes of Madhupur there has been considerable superimposition of the Hindu concept of Karma on the original Mundari concept of the soul. In this village, there has not been a single case of ***roa daka*** during the last 30 years.

All my informants agreed on the following points :

All living objects possess a peculiar airy substance known as soul, *Jiu* or *Atma*, which is responsible for the maintenance of life. Its existence is felt through the breath and the heart beat. Death is caused by the escape of the soul through the nose, mouth or the eyes.

As to the seat of the soul in the human body, my informants were not of one mind. They either said that they did not know ; while a few indicated the head or the heart to be the seat of the soul. There is also considerable difference of opinion about the fate of the soul after death.

Sitaram Sing's wife (aged 60 years) said, 'On death, the soul roams about in the fields and jungles. After some time it is again reborn in any form it wishes, namely, animal, bird, man etc. Yama-raj cannot take away the tatoo marks on the body. I do not know anything about heaven or hell. The soul, on passing away from the dead body, goes to the Paitkar (a man of the professional painter caste) to inform him about the cause of death and form taken in rebirth.'

Gobardhan Sing (aged 55 years) said, 'The soul probably escapes through the mouth, eye or nose in the form of air. It is called back by the ***roa daka*** rite, whereby the departed soul meets the ancestral spirits. I have heard about heaven and hell but do not know anything about them.'

The above two informants represent the most unsophisticated section of the community. Even they have a vague knowledge of heaven and hell. Let us now cite a few more statements indicating more elaborate infiltration of Hindu concepts.

Surendra Sing (aged 32 years) said, 'The soul leaves the body through the oral opening in the form of air. It is reborn again in some living form ; the form depending on the type of works performed by the person during his stay on earth. It is said that the soul takes human form after passing through 84 lac wombs. To give alms to Brahmins or Vaishnavas is the greatest of all virtues.

To kill Brahmins, Vaishnavas, cows or women are the greatest of all sins. Heaven is situated in the sky. The virtuous go to heaven to enjoy pleasure and plenty, while the sinner goes to hell to suffer immeasurable tortures'.

Gobinda Sing (aged 48 years) said, 'Man's life is due to the presence of the soul in his body. I am not sure which part of the body is the seat of the soul; probably it permeates the entire body. It is an invisible substance. It is an independent entity, capable of thinking, feeling and acting. The soul escapes from the body probably through the eye, nose or mouth, thereby causing death to the person. On escape from the body the soul is divided into three parts, namely, *Pretatma*, *Jibatma* and *Paramatma*. *Paramatma* goes directly to God to combine with Him. *Jibatma* hovers round the dead body for a considerable period even after cremation or burial. *Pretatma* is accompained to heaven (situated in the sky) by the messenger of Yama. At the entrance to heaven Yama assesses the amount of virtue acquired by the soul during its period of stay on earth and passes orders for a proportionate measure of happiness. Those that are virtuous (i.e. those who have given alms and gifts to the needy, do not tell lies and obey parents and elders and offer prayers to God) go through the east gate of heaven and enjoy blissful happiness. Here they remain in company with gods like Indra, Varuna etc., and enjoy perpetual youth. The sinners (to kill Brahmins, cows, women and children is the greatest of all sins, while next to these in importance are telling lies and committing theft) go through the south gate to hell where they suffer inhuman torture. They are sometimes thrown into fire or refuse heaps and are mercilessly beaten by the servants of Yama. On termination of the period of stay in heaven or hell the soul is sent back to earth to be reborn. The form at rebirth depends upon the works done on earth in the previous life. It is said that the soul has to move through 84 lac wombs to finally attain the human form'.

Statements can be enumerated further to indicate a wide range of variation in the belief regarding the fate of the soul in after life. The relation of heaven and hell with the soul is

accepted by all, but information regarding life in those two places seems to be very vague and not standardised.

As a whole, contact with Bengali Hindus seems not to have changed the original ideas of the Bhumijes about the nature of the soul ; only regarding its fate after death Hindu ideas of heaven, hell and of Karma have been incorporated, replacing the earlier practice of calling back the soul to the sacred tabernacle in order to be identified with the ancestral spirits.

(*d*) *Methods of worship*

The typical method of worship of the deities among the tribal Mundas of Ranchi is given below.

Some offerings are made to the gods along with prayers. The prayers are uttered in day to day language, in the form of personal requests to the deities. The offerings include rice, rice-beer, fowl, goat, sheep, etc. and there are indications that formerly buffaloes, pigs and even cattle used to be offered as sacrifice. No image of any deity is ever made by them.

The Hindu method of worship differs from the above in the following : worship is done through the intermediary of a specialist Brahmin priest, who utters formalised incantations in Sanskrit (not understood by the average public), generally in front of an image. The offerings strictly exclude fowl, cattle or pigs and include some special articles like incense, sandal, the sacred basil leaves, a light, *ghee*, sesamum seeds etc.

The Bhumij method of worship, as we find in Madhupur today, has remained basically the same as their original tribal pattern. In their religious rites, Brahmins have not yet any access (except in the zemindar family of Bamni where Brahmin priests officiate during the Durga Puja). The prayers are invariably in the form of personal requests in their daily language. Some changes are marked in the articles offered during worship. Offering of cattle or buffaloes has been completely given up. There is also a distinct tendency towards giving up the offering of fowl. About twenty years ago, the sacrifice of fowl in the Sarhul festival and Goth Puja used to be considered absolutely essential. For the last 15 years this has been replaced by sweets, for, otherwise the local Hindus deride them. Typical Hindu elements of

offerings like incense, lighted lamp, *ghee*, *durba* grass, have become common in all their *pujas*. In this area, for nearly the last 100 years, each Bhumij house has had a sacred basil plant in a *tulsi mancha* at the centre of the household quadrangle. This serves in a way as the domestic temple, for all family *pujas* are done at its foot. We are as yet unable to say whether vermilion, a very typical element common throughout the aboriginal belt of Chotanagpur and contiguous areas, has been borrowed from the Hindus.

(*e*) ***The village priest and magicians***

In every Bhumij village round Madhupur, such as Makula, Burrudih, Gordih, Bamni etc., there is a village priest or Laya. The Laya always belongs to the Bhumij community. The post of Laya descends in a family along the male line and there are indications that in Madhupur as well as in some of the neighbouring villages, the Laya and the village Headman were the same person. Even today the Ghatoal's, i e., village Headman cum Zemindar's house in Madhupur is known as Laya Ghar.

The Laya is entrusted with the duty of communal worship in the village mainly on the occasion of festivals. He is chiefly concerned with the village tutelary deities like Jaher Bura, Jaher Buri, Dessauli, Bhangat Kudra, Bankuanri etc., to whom he offers prayers in general day to day language (this form of prayer is locally known us *kadra kadri*). The principal occasions on which he performs *pujas* are the following :

1. Sarhul Parab in the month of Vaisakh
2. Jantal Parab in Asarh
3. Goth Puja in Kartik
4. Baram Baita and Magh Puja in Magh.

Besides the above regular occasions, the Laya has to offer worship on the occasion of communal hunting. If there be severe drought he may have to pray to Jaher Buri on behalf of the villagers. The Laya's wife is known as Layan. Today she has practically no function in Madhupur other than that of reaching the articles of *puja* to the place of worship. In a few villages like Pathardih, Amjhor etc., on the occasion of any marriage, the Layan, with a sword in hand, must accompany the party of women

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to bring ceremonial water from the village tank. From Sarhul songs, it appears that formerly the Layan had a more important part to play in the *puja* and festival.

Sajo sajo Laya shalai phuley
Sajo sajo Layan sindur kajaley

'Oh Laya ! dress up and decorate in *sal* flowers. Oh Layan ! dress up and decorate in *sindur* and *kajal*'. This decline of the Layan's participation in the festival seems to be the result of Bengali Hindu contact, for the latter look upon women's active and open participation in religious rites along with men with disfavour.

The position of the Laya, too, has evidently gone down in recent times. During my first month of contact the villagers even declared that they had no Laya and I found it difficult to get the name of the Laya. This secretiveness indicates that they feel with shy of the institution of Layaship disclosing their identity as a non-Hindu tribal people.

An institution is running parallel to Layaship in Madhupur for the last 80 years. Just as the village has its sacred grove it has also its *Sivathan* where Siva is worshipped during Chait Parab in Vaisakh, a few days before the Sarhul Parab. For conducting this *puja* there is a priest known a *Siva Laya*. Now, as the Sarhul Parab, Jahera and Layaship are going down to secrecy with a stamp of shame, the parallel Hindu institutions of Chait Parab, Sivathan and Siva Laya are emerging in considerable glory. A time may come when the earlier institution will be completely superseded by the latter cult.

While the whole village has a single priest or Laya whose post is held hereditarily and who invariably belongs to the Bhumij community, a single village may have a number of magicians or medicine men (locally known as Ojhas), who may belong to any community. His post or profession is not hereditary.

The chief function of these Ojhas is to avert or cure diseases. According to Jadab Sing (aged 80 years, Madhupur), during his boyhood, the method of treatment by the Ojhas simply consisted of the following : First of all the cause of illness was divined by one of the usual processes *Tel dekha*, *Chaul dekha*, *Jhupan* etc., and then some sacrifices were offered to the spirits responsible

with effective spells. The sacrificial object was generally a fowl. Occasionally the Ojha also sucked out magically potent objects supposed to have been introduced into the affected person's body by witches or black magicians. Very little of herbal medicines used to be given. Modern practitioners practising Kabiraji, Homeopathic or Allopathic systems were completely unknown.

The picture has considerably changed today. In the village of Madhupur the specialists engaged in the treatment of diseases may now-a-days be classified as follows.

Kharia Ojhas—They restrict their activities almost entirely to driving away evil spirits with suitable magico-religious rites. Sucking out of magically potent objects from the body is very often practised by them.

Telua Ojhas—They also attribute the majority of diseases to spirit possession and avert them with magico-religious rites, often requiring sacrifice of fowl.

Kabiraji Ojhas—Are the local Ojhas whose method of treatment mainly consists of the use of herbal medicines. They do not take recourse to *Tel dekha*, *Chaul dekha* process and mainly conduct the treatment in terms of physical symptoms of the patient. But these Ojhas also believe in supernatural interference in causing diseases and allow the Telua Ojhas to attend cases where illness has been caused by spirit possession.

Doctors—For the last 20 years people have become acquainted with doctors who prescribe Homeopathic and Allopathic medicines. Through them the Bhumijes have come to know of the following medicines :

Quinine and Palludrine—preventive of malaria

M. & B. tablets—preventive of pneumonia

But doctors are very rarely called for except in very serious cases where the local Ojhas have failed.

In general, we find a distinct decrease in the frequency of offering of fowl sacrifice as advised by Telua Ojhas. On the other hand Kabiraji herbal treatment has become fairly popular. In the presence of the Homeopathic or Allopathic doctors coming with a display of their medical apparatus the Telua Ojhas feel small and diffident about the efficacy of their cult.

(*f*) *Influence of Hindu Sadhus, Vaishnavas and Brahmin priests upon the local Bhumijes*

During my stay in Madhupur I found professional beggars. belonging to the *Boishtom* or Vaishnava church, coming to Bhumij houses very often to sing songs in the name of God and 'virtuous life'. Besides them sadhus and sannyasis also occasionally came. Whenever a Brahmin priest comes to their houses the Bhumijes show great respect by saluting and kissing the dust of their feet. The Vaishnava mendicants with their songs and preachings impart knowledge about the cult of *Bhakti* and qualities of Krishna and Radha. The Brahmin priests are particularly keen about imparting the knowledge of Hindu scriptures and they insist on the necessity of employing priests in important social rites like marriage and funeral.

According to my old informants, Sahadeb Sing (aged 80 years) and Jadav Sing (aged 80 years) during their childhood the Vaishnava mendicants would not visit their homes so regularly as we find them today, and employment of Brahmin priest in social ceremonies was very rare among the common Bhumij farmers. According to Govinda Sing (aged 48 years), for the last 20 years, the custom of taking *dikhsa* or religious initiation from a Vaishnava *Karnadhar Guru* (the preceptor who imparts the sacred spells into the ear) is considered essential before a couple is considered eligible for marriage. Govinda Sing of Madhupur gave me the following account describing the activities of sadhus in Tola Bhangat of village Madhupur, 'So far as we know, Srinath Sadhu (a Vaishnava) was the first sadhu to introduce the *dikhsa* (initiation system in our village. He came to our village about 50 years ago accompanied by his spiritual consort. The sadhu had a very fair complexion and fine physical features. His very look impressed the Bhumijes of the village. He put up at Madhusudan Ghatoal's house. Jadab Sing, Bhabani Sing and Madhusudan Sing were the first in the village to accept *diskha* under the sadhu. The sadhu laid particular stress on the following points :

1. Obey your Guru or religious preceptor by taking *diksha* from him and avoid going to hell.
2. Give up rice-beer and other intoxicating liquors and fowl's meat.

3. Discharge of semen is the root of all evil ; attain virtue by withholding the discharge of semen.

The sadhu sang votive songs with the accompaniment of *tuila* and *gupijantra*. People were attracted by his pleasant personality and sweet voice. Madhusudan Sing allotted a plot of land for building quarters for the sadhu. As days passed the influence of the sadhu increased. On every full moon day songs and festivities used to be observed at his residence or *Akhra*. One year there was a great drought. The villagers prayed to Srinath Sadhu to bring in rains. The sadhu performed a *yajna* and sat in meditation. After about an hour drops of water trickled down his beard and very soon there were heavy showers. This incident increased the influence of the sadhu tremendously. A number of families gave up rearing fowl and taking intoxicating liquors. Through Srinath's teachings the villagers come to know about *Ramayana*, *Mahabharata* and *Sri Chaitanya Charitamrita*. But a considerable number of families still persisted in keeping fowl and drinking rice-beer.

In 1318 B. S. Srinath Sadhu went away from Bhangat Tola for a periodic tour to some neighbouring villages. Just then another sadhu name Kistodas (He was originally a Bhumij) came to the neighbouring village of Makula. Jadav Sing of Bhangat became his disciple and brought him to Bhangat. Kistodas Sadhu seemed very well versed in the scriptures and his spiritual consort too was a learned lady. Kistodas derided the doctrine of puritan asceticism preached by Srinath and propounded a hedonistic cult :—

Hari Bol Bol
Murgi masher jhol
Joyan meyer kol.

(Sing the name of Hari,
Take fowl curry,
Take to the lap of young women).

The villagers, after prolonged practice of asceticism under Srinath Sadhu, eagerly listened to the new sadhu's preachings. The sadhu became popular. He sang *jhumur* songs and joined in dances and thus fitted well into the existing pattern of the local Bhumijes.

In 1318 B. S. Srinath Sadhu returned to Bhangat accompanied by his spiritual consort. There was a debate between Srinath

Sadhu and Kistodas on the knowledge of the scriptures. Srinath was defeated and he left Bhangat. Since then Kistodas reigned supreme till his death at Bhangat in 1333 B. S. Since his death no sadhu has stayed in the village permanently and the religious enthusiasm which was created by these sadhus is largely on the decline.

The sadhus have particularly influenced the lives of the following persons in Bhangattola.

1. Bhavani Sing—He died at the age of 80 years, in November, 1950. Since coming in contact with Srinath Sadhu he is supposed to have remained celebate. He kept a beard and did not cut the hair of the head and used to be known as *Baul* by the villagers. His wife, too, is known as *Baulin*. Bhabani Sing did not believe in the village tutelary duties. He believed in Parameswar, Krishna and Radha. He regularly read *Chaitanya Charitamrita* and *Bhakti Ratnamala* and gave up meat and rice-beer.

2. Jadav Sing (aged 80 years) like Bhavani Sing keeps a beard and does not cut the hair of his head. His wife is still alive. As a disciple of Kistodas Sadhu he does not believe in restraint from worldly pleasure and is supposed to have the power of withholding the discharge of semen at the time of copulation. He takes plenty of meat and liquors. His stout constitution is ascribed to his power of withholding the discharge of semen. He is notorious for frequently indulging in litigations and is feared for his sharp understanding of legal points. He is a man of very strong determination, for which his affiliation to the cult of the Sadhu seems responsible. Jadav Sing is more concerned with the attainment of power than developing submissive devotion to God.

3. Durgacharan Sing (aged 49 years) is a bachelor and is popularly called *Sadhu*. He works as an officer under the Ghatoal and has given up his property in favour of his younger brother. He led a life of sexual indulgence in his youth, but after going through the *diksha* under Kistodas Sadhu, he has turned his attention towards the control of sex-life. He puts on *kanthi* (sacred bead necklace) and has a deeply devotional nature. He has great respect for sadhus and sannyasis. He has an amiable disposition and is sufficiently free from the greed of wealth. He has given up taking fowl or rice-beer and has knowledge of Hindu scriptures. Along with his belief in Bhagaban

(Siva and Krishna), Durga, Radha and Kali, he also believes in the village tutelary gods.

4. Banamali Sing (aged 38 years) took *dikhsa* from Krishtodas Sadhu. He has deep respect for sadhus and sannyasis. Withholding the discharge of semen and consequent attainment of power is considered by him to be the highest form of religion. He has also maintained his belief in the Bhumij tribal deities.

5. Govinda Sing (aged 48 years) is a very keen personality with whom the writer had the opportunity of coming in very close contact for a considerable period of time. From his boyhood days he has been excessively sensitive to any creative enterprise, whether singing, dancing, playing, tending cattle or making love. The sadhus at Bhangat profoundly impressed his searching heart. He took *dikhsa* from Kistodas and learnt devotional songs and the teachings of the scriptures. He gave up meat and cutting the hair of the head. He brought two brass images of Sri Krishna and Radha and every evening he worshipped them with incense and prayers. When his only son died in spite of prayers to the deities, Govinda Sing took the images and threw them away into the village tank. But his faith came back soon after. He observes fasting on every New Moon and Full Moon, and every evening he offers prayers to Krishna, Siva, Durga, Kali, Ganesh and Bhagaban with incense, a lighted lamp and *gulancha* flowers. Some years ago he stayed about a fortnight in the jungles, living entirely on green leaves and tubers, in search of God. Religion has difinitely a moral import for Govinda Sing. He is strictly honest and is full of love for his neighbours. Belief in God and the cult *Bhakti* has brought about a steady integration in his personality. He is held in very high esteem by the villagers and is addressed as *Thakur* (the holy one). His belief is not limited to Hindu gods alone but he offers the same devotion to the village tutelary deities.

According to my informants Govinda Sing and Jadav Sing, the enthusiasm for the scriptures and sadhus has definitely declined during the last twenty years. Today the interest of the modern Bhumij youth seems to be in the direction of elaborate dresses and education in the school or the search for some remunerative job in towns.

Four Hundred Centuries of Cave Art. *By Abbe H. Breuil. Translated by Miss Mary E. Boyle. Realised by Fernand Windels. Centre d' Etudes et de Documentation Prehistoriques. Montignac, Dordogne. 1952. pp. 418. Price not mentioned.*

This remarkably valuable production from the pen of Abbe Breuil will be welcomed by all students of Prehistoric Archaeology. In it, he has, first of all, given an account of the discovery of the caves, and then dealt with their distribution, conditions of preservation and so on. This is followed by a discussion about the probable origin of the art, its chronology and evolution. These altogether cover about fifty pages.

The preliminary portion is then succeeded by a detailed description, accompanied by illustrations, of the art of Altamira, Font du Gaume, Les Combaralles, Lascaux, Les Trois-Freres and Niaux. Then comes a similiar treatment of 20 sites in the Rhone and Pyrennean region, 28 in Lot, Dordogne, 6 in Gironde, Charente, Vienne and Yonne, 30 in Spain and 2 in Italy.

A summary of chronological classification and a bibliography bring the book to an end. The illustrations are either from photographs or from drawings made by the author himself or by others. Some of them again are coloured.

Though the descriptions and discussions are written specifically for the general reader, yet the professional student of Prehistory will never miss the high scientific quality which has always been associated with the name of the Abbe Breuil. The illustrations, in themselves, will be welcomed by all lovers of Art.

N. K. Bose.

Race Relations in Negro Africa. *By G. S. Ghurye. Asia Publishing House, 17 Gunbow Street, Bombay-1,1952. Price Rs. 4/8/-. pp. 96.*

Prof. Ghurye has presented in this booklet a summary of the economic position of the natives of Africa in different portions of that continent. The information has been gathered

from various reports published by official and non-official agencies, and it will therefore be useful for the general reader in following the swift trend of events taking place in Kenya or South Africa.

There is not much of value for the anthropologist, although the name appeared at first to be inviting.

N. K. Bose.

Religion and Society among the Coorgs of South India. *By M. N. Srinivas. Oxford : Clarendon Press, 1952. pp. xvi + 267. 12 plates.*

In this book the author presents an ethnographic study of Coorg society with an emphasis on its sacred aspects. The society of the Coorgs is more sacred than secular. The religion of the Coorgs is not something put away to be practised at intervals, but rather constitutes a series of rites and beliefs which are parts of social action.

The Coorgs are a caste in the province of Coorg in South India. They formed the aristocracy under the Lingayat Rajas, and possessed wealth and power. There are more than forty other castes in Coorg, but the Coorgs come into close contact with only a few of them. The author analyses the position of the Coorgs in relation to the others. As elsewhere in India, the Brahmins are in the top position, but the other castes are not placed in a fixed hierarchy. In Coorg all things associated with the higher castes, such as their occupations, houses, clothes, and general mode of living are symbols of higher status. The author finds, however, that the concept of pollution is fundamental in preserving the differences of status and distance between castes. 'Contact of any kind, touching, dining, sex, and other relations between castes which are structurally distant results in the higher of the two castes being polluted.' (p. 26.) The lower castes admire and like to imitate the higher castes, and this has been the most powerful factor in drawing in peoples of non-Sanskrit culture within the fold of Sanskrit Hinduism. The Coorgs think of themselves as belonging to the broad Hindu group, although many non-Sanskrit elements remain within their religious behavior.

The joint household, called *okka,* as elsewere in India is a dominant institution. Sons continue the *okka* and inherit the ancestral property. A woman becomes the member of her husband's *okka.* Superiority prevails of men over women, and of elder members over younger members of the household. Deferential behaviour towards the elder members is essential.

The village is the smallest but the most important territorial group. The *nad* consists of several villages and is the next bigger group. A council of elders is present in every village, and a village headman whose office is hereditary presides. The headmanship, however, is thought to belong to *okka* and not to an individual person. The *nad* similarly has a council of elders. A decision taken in a village assembly is open for appeal in a *nad* assembly. Regardless of the caste divisions the village has a unique type of solidarity. Every caste cooperates if a disaster overtakes an *okka,* or during the harvest festivals.

In this society the world is divided into the good sacred and the bad sacred objects and acts. The term for ritual purity is *madi,* and the term for ritual impurity is *pole.* The impure objects are avoided and the pure objects and acts are appreciated.

The household has some cults of its own and performs certain rituals to preserve the well-being of the household group. Within the household rituals are performed to mark the stages of importance to the life of the individul, such as birth, initiation, marriage, and death. These rituals are called *mangala.* 'Mangala is an auspicious or good-sacred ceremony and it has to be performed in an auspicious day.' (p. 70.)

The larger units such as the castes and the village do not have as much ritual behavior attached to them as the *okka.* However each caste has for itself a cult to maintain its integrity, and the feeling of distance between castes, and the ideas of pollution are parts of this cult. The village cults mainly take the form of worshipping the village deities. These performances are thought to bring good to the whole village and all the castes take part in some way or other. The harvest festivals are the most important ceremonies.

This book with its Durkheimian treatment of religion meets a much felt need in Indian social anthropology. To the world

outside, Hindu society in general appears to be cumbersome and curious with its contradictory doctrines and confusing rituals as presented by both Western and Indian writers. The concepts of the sacred society, and of rites and beliefs as constituting the good sacred or the religious behavior of this society help in the understanding of the Coorgs and bring to light the active forces playing upon the lives of the people. The reviewer believes, however, that the material in this book could have been presented in a more cohesive manner. Often the details overcome the reader so much that he is at a loss to find the perspective or the views of the author.

Jyotirmoyee Sarma.

The Mende of Sirra Leone. A West African people in transition. *By K. L. Little. London, Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1951. pp. 307.*

In this book the author aims at presenting a complete picture of Mende society and discusses topically its economic and social institutions. The Mendes inhabit mainly the central and the eastern part of the British Protectorate of Sierra Leone in West Africa. They are a large tribe forming one-third the population of the Protectorate, and many also live in the western corner of Liberia. Rice cultivation is the main form of agriculture with additional minor crops. The plough is not used, but hoe cultivation prevails.

The basic social unit is the *mawe*, a joint household in that it often contains members of three generations. Such a household 'usually occupies a group of adjacent houses, placed in the form of a circle and enclosing a compound'. (p. 98). Persons living in the same compound are called *kuwui*, and the term suggests that they are related to each other through blood and marriage. The Mende settlements have the pattern of small towns surrounded by a group of villages. The towns consist of ten or fifteen *kuwuis*.

Besides the household, the life of an individul is dominated by the secret society which is entered at childhood. The secret society takes one away from his household, and trains him for his future adult life in company with those of his own age group.

The boys' society called the *poro* holds a regular school for a part of the year. For the time being non-members may not enter the camp. Boys are circumcised before they are initiated into the *poro.* Then they learn to work, provide their own food, keep the camp clean, and to bear hardships without. They are taught methods of agriculture, basket-weaving, and other crafts. Parents are expected to feed the spirits for as long as their boys are in camp. The initiation rite and the time spent in the bush marks the transition from boyhood to manhood. To enter the *poro* is to be 'swallowed' by the spirit, 'and separation from his parents and kinsfolk signifies his death. The marks on his back are evidence of the spirit's teeth. At the end of his time, he is "delivered" by the spirit and "reborn" '. (p. 120).

The *sande*, similar to the *poro,* educate girls for the accepted pattern of life. The initiation rite for girls includes an incision on the clitoris. The girls remain confined for a time. Songs and dances are learned in the *sande.* These days girls trained in midwifery and hygiene are allowed to teach there. Although traditional costumes are worn in the bush, latest fashions are also taught to be worn on their return home.

A girl is betrothed in infancy, and after her return from the *sande* she is married. The polygynous form of marriage prevails. Additional wives increase the social position of a man and of his elder wives. Usually the chiefs and big men have more wives than commoners. Moreover they are agricultural assets, and help in other ways in the social economy. The average number of wives a big man has is usually three. The system of bride price prevails. The unequal distribution of women due to polygyny is balanced by the institution of 'friendship' between married women and single men.

The Mende political system is constituted of the chief and the council. 'The basic political unit is the section, comprising a number of towns and villages ; and a number of sections made up the modern chiefdom'. (p. 175). A section is headed by a sub-chief, and the chiefdom by a paramount chief. The chiefs are descendants of founders. A person who opened up virgin territory is considered to have been a founder. A chiefdom could also have been founded by conquest and intrigue. The *poro*

society supplements the administration of chiefs, and gives religious support to many local rules and practices. The *poro* rules due to their mystic origin are inviolable.

Today the Tribal Authority is set up by the government to examine the rival claims to the position of chief often brought forth when a chiefdom becomes vacant. Members of the Tribal Authority are elected. The Administrative Officer, however, holds much power and the rights of the claimants are judged before they are put to the vote of the Tribal Authority. The disadvantages of this system are that the chief loses much of his natural role as a leader and that it 'promotes and encourages the practice of graft and creates a good deal of scepticism regarding the political insight of the central government itself'. (p. 214).

At present contact with western ideas and habits and literacy tend to dissociate the youth from tribal life. Money economy tends to bring more men and women into the towns. The original settlers of the freetowns and colonies are called Creoles, and they have been in touch with English civilization for a long time. They hold the more responsible positions in public life all over the country. Literacy has come to mean civilized behaviour. The modern social hierarchy consits of the European class at the top, then the Creole class, next the native class, and the non-literate class at the bottom.

This book could have been written in a clearer style. As the facts are not integrated, it is difficult for the reader to organize the material in order to gain a complete understanding of this culture.

Jyotirmoyee Sarma.

Cave Explorations in Iran 1949. *By Carleton S. Coon, Published by the University Museum, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, U. S. A. 1951. Price $ 1.50. pp. 125. Illustrated by photographs and sketches.*

Through the excavation of a number of mounds in Iran during the last few decades archæologists have revealed a number of sites where we find the development of prehistoric cultures beginning from early Neolithic well into the Metal Age cultures of that country. These Neolithic cultures required linking up

specially with the earlier Palæolithic cultures. Such investigation will not only clear the picture about the development and diffusion of human cultures belonging to this area, but will perhaps solve some of the outstanding problems relating to the origin and development of prehistoric cultures in Europe, with whose material aspects we are already very well acquainted. In view of the above facts, the results of the exploration of some caves in Iran by Carleton S. Coon, as embodied in the present monograph, will be of very great interest to students of prehistory.

As a pioneer worker, Mr. Coon is right in selecting four different caves located in widely separated areas of Iran out of a large number of caves observed by him. The caves are (1) Bisitun in the Zagros slope, about thirty miles east of Kermanshah, (2) Tamtama, near lake Urmia, (3) Khunik in southern Khorassan, which according to the author is really a rock-shelter, and (4) Belt Cave which is five miles west of Behshahr, about four miles from the Caspian Sea.

Briefly, the major findings of the different caves are as follows :

(1) *Bisitun* : two soil layers. From the top of the lower layer potsherds appear. The lower layer contained mainly flint implements, such as points, knives, discs, scrapers etc. The points exhibited a Levallois technique. There were also a number of fossilized animal and bird bones, a fragment of a human radius and one tooth.

(2) *Tamtama* : two layers. The lower yellow sandy soil contained typologically poor implements made mainly on chert together with fossilized animal and bird bones and one human femur.

(3) *Khunik* : the layers are disturbed. The implements are knives, points, discs etc., made on flint, chert, chalcedony.

(4) *Belt Cave* : according to Mr. Coon two major cultural layers. Neolithic layer at the top containing implements such as celts, pestles, querns etc.,

and pottery below with a Mesolithic layer having scrapers, points, knives, geometrics, sickle blades etc. made on flint and a few bone tools. A large number of animal and bird bones have been recovered but none are fossilized. Human remains have been unearthed from both the cultural layers.

With regard to the question of dating the different tool-bearing layers, three methods have been followed: (1) geological, (2) typological and (3) analysis of carbon-containing material. The last method is of course used for absolute dating. As there was 'no suitable material from either Bisitun or Tamtama' and as Khunik's statigraphy was disturbed, so the author sent carbon containing materials from Belt Cave to Dr. W. F. Libby at Chicago for analysis. But the analysis reveals that 'The three Mesolithic samples are thus dated in reverse order, ——'. And the author thinks that 'something is obviously wrong somewhere'. That is quite possible, but there is nothing wrong in this method. That is also the case with the geological method. But a different note is struck in the following passage. 'In the Bisitun Cave, therefore, three major periods of occupation may be recognized : the Pleistocene period upto the level at which intrusive pottery is found'. With regard to a period when large pieces of stone fell from the cave roof in a layer of the Bisitun Cave the author tentatively correlates it with a period of great cold and moisture and says, 'It is not hard to believe that it came at the time of the last glacial advance and peak, whenever that may have been, in the Zagros region'. This may be true ; but we believe it is precarious to assume that the fall of rocks was due to the wet plus cold character of the climate.

With regard to the typological method itself, it is high time that archæologists should think about the limitations of this method before applying it for purposes of dating. Through an application of the typological method, earlier prehistorians came to the conclusion that the North African Capsian culture exercised its influence on the development of the Chatelperronian of France. But through the later work of Dr. D. A. E. Garrod, we have come to learn that the lower Capsian of Africa is chronologically

later than the Chatelperronian of France. And many such examples can be cited. Thus we see that important questions regarding the diffusion or the direction of movement and the centre of origin of a particular culture become difficult to explain if we take the age-value of typology for granted.

The animal remains of these caves have been studied and interpreted mainly from the point of view of the environment. In the case of Belt Cave the remains have been studied with regard to the maturity of the animals by which the author has made some interesting observations on the problem of domestication. According to him, 'During late Mesolithic times the people who inhabited Belt Cave were hunters,......Their principal prey were gazelle and ox.......During this period they began to domesticate the goat purely as a meat and skin animal'. The author furthermore suggests that this hypothesis should be strengthened by means of further excavation.

In analysing the artifacts of the different caves the author has given us a large number of tables based on the blank types and levels. But these levels have no other significance than that each level with 20 cm. depth has been given a number which is important only at the time of excavation. We know that selections and preparation of blank from which implements are turned out have both cultural and functional connotations, and we may classify them as cores, flakes, blades etc. But are we entitled to divide them in the manner of the author ? In the case of flakes he has divided them into coarse flake, medium flake, flat flake, slender flake etc. Are we to assume that they were done intentionally by Stone Age craftsmen with definite workmanship traditions behind each of them ? Furthermore, we find it difficult to understand the significance of measuring an optimum thickness of the points of the Bisitun Cave found out by statistically analysing the thicknesses (taken by means of a caliper) on the basis of different levels. The question is, can we treat prehistoric stone implements in the same way as fossils of plants or animals, or as products of modern machines ? It is indeed very doubtful if the finer divisions of the flake culture described above have any real cultural significance.

From the study of the human remains, the author suggests

'that certain Neanderthaloid physical features persisted in the local population of the Caspian shore until long after the end of the last glacier'. But he has himself sounded a note of caution as the materials are scanty.

The author diserves special congratulation for his pains-taking and thorough scientific work. The results of his explorations are not at all unpromising. The old question, as raised by Dr. D. A. E. Garrod regarding the origin of backed blade industry in Iran, still remains unsolved. But no negative evidence has been revealed. Moreover some interesting questions have been raised by the present exploration which justify further research.

Gautam Sankar Ray.

Good Company : A study of Nyakyusa Age Villages. *By Monica Wilson. Published for the International African Institute by the Oxford University Press, London. 1951. Price. 28s. pp. 278.+16 illustrations and 3 maps.*

Nyakyusa, a Bantu-speaking people, live in the north-west corner of Lake Nyasa. Nyakyusa are primarily the people of the lake plain in Tanganyika and those around Masoka, but now those living in Silya and Sakli are also included within this group. The whole region where these people live is an isolated one due primarily to geographical reasons. The first Europeans who observed this country belonged to the Livingstonian Mission of 1875. Gradually other missions succeeded in breaking the isolation of the region. But the isolation and self-sufficiency of the Nyakyusa were completley broken by the two world wars. They are now being gradually absorbed into world society.

This little known African tribe was well studied by Godfrey Wilson and his wife Mrs. Monica Wilson, the writer of the present volume. Both of them conducted field work in this area between 1934 and 1938. Both collected data according to the scientific methods of field investigation ; they learnt their language and even took notes in their language. After completing the field investigation they decided to write three books on Nyakyusa kinship, Nyakyusa villages and Nyakyusa chiefdoms. But unfortunately Godfrey Wilson expired

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before the writing of any one of the contemplated volumes. The present work is entirely due to Mrs. Wilson, but it is naturally based on the data colleted by herself and her husband.

Nyakyusa society as observed by the writer may be viewed as three circles of relationship, the relationship of kinship, village relationship and the relationship with and beyond the chiefdoms. Though the present volume deals primarily with the second circle, it refers to other forms of relationship as well. There are altogether six chapters on Village Organisation, Economic Co-operation, Values, Mystical Interdependence, Maintenance of Order and Characteristics of an Age Village Organisation. The system of administration introduced by the Europeans has modified the traditional system, and the simple society has been further complicated by the conversion of a minority into Christianity. The converted Christians have their own values which are quite different from those of the pagans. The writer has constantly referred to such differences between the pagans and the Christians as well as the effects of economic intercourse. The title of the present volume is also quite appropriate in accordance with the characteristics of these people. The Nyakyusa are an extremely democratic people and very hospitable to outsiders. The writer and her husband enjoyed the good company these people. Even among themselves, these people live in the 'good company' of their age-grades.

One of the chief merits of the book lies in the lucidity of its style. It has been possible because the writer has avoided constant reference to documents and cases in the body of the text. Instead of doing so, she has added a new section of about 100 pages containing extracts from relevant documents which illustrate the type of evidence used. There are altogether thirty such select documents which are of great interest even to the general student of anthropology. This new method introduced by Mrs. Wilson is, in the opinion of the reviewer, an ideal one, for it makes the body of the text readable without detracting from its scientific worth. The present work has been further enriched by well-executed maps and a good number of plates depicting the life of the people.

S. R. Das.

The Life-giving Myth and Other Essays. *By A. M. Hocart. Edited with an Introduction by Lord Raglan. Methuen & Co. Ltd. London, 1952. Price not mentioned. pp. 252.*

Hocart, a well-known sociologist and writer of a number of books of repute, died before completing the publication of some of his essays. His much discussed work on caste was also published after his death. Lord Raglan has done a valuable service by hunting up his papers and selecting these essays for publication in the present form. Hocart himself contemplated the publication of such a work, as a list of papers left by him testifies. Lord Raglan has, however, made his own selection.

The book contains thirty essays on different subjects, some of which were published previously in journals. There is no denying the fact that the subject matter of the essays might appear largely unconnected, but there is one thread running all through. Justification of the title of the book lies in the fact that myth is the giver of life and power—this is the key-note of the present work. Some of the essays, such as the Life-giving myth, Origin of Monotheism, Yakshas and the Veddas, Kinship system, etc., are not only interesting but also full of source material.

Hocart's study of Indian history is indeed praiseworthy. There are, however, some statements which are, no doubt, sweeping in character. He casts a doubt on Greek influence on the development of the Epic and Puranic myth in India. Greek and Indian myths, no doubt, bear an affinity which does not necessarily indicate the influence of one on the other. The similarity may have been due to common origin. There are other statements which require further elucidation and corroboration. Thus he says, 'The germ of monotheism lies in the doctrine of divine kingship'. (p. 74). 'Religion and politics are inseparable and it is vain to divorce them...their common origin still operates on men's mind'. (p. 76). 'The original form of money is the fee paid to the priest who performs a sacrifice'. (p. 103). 'The early kings are law-givers rather than administrators'. (p. 109).

There are similar other observations which cannot be accepted as final unless further evidence is put forward in confirmation. His essay on 'Why study the savages?' is indeed revealing.

The present day study of savages is not so much to find out the origin of our customs and to give a picture of the life of our ancestors, but it is primarily directed towards the amelioration of the life of the savages themselves. The modern field anthropologist is indeed the best doctor who can give prescriptions for the betterment and upliftment of the savages to our own cultural level. Anthropology is now an applied science. His essay on India and the Pacific refers to some common cultural elements which might have been due to racial and cultural migrations. In this connection it is interesting to refer to the cultural contributions made by the Austric speakers towards the development of Indian culture. His last essay on cultural decadence in India is a study of the historical process of the rise and decline of culture. His observations on pre-Christian art and cultural process are not very convincing. It is indeed very difficult to trace the historical process in India unless one is fully imbued with the spirit of India's history and culture.

The present work, however, stands on its own merits of having supplied us with materials on a variety of subjects on which little study has been made so far. We are greatly indebted to Lord Raglan for having made available the unpublished papers of Hocart. We believe, this work will be of great help to students of anthropology in general.

S. R. Das.

The God of the Witches. *By Margaret Alice Murray, D. Lit., Faber and Faber Limited, London. 1952. pp. 212.*

In this second edition of Murray's work several additions have been made, particularly the chapter on the position of the witch and some other interesting accounts of the survival of the primitive rites.

Dr. Murray has done a great service to the cause of anthropology by tracing the existence of primitive religion throughout the Middle Ages. He has for the first time tried to give a clear picture of the survival of the early primitive cults from contemporary evidence. The records of the Middle Ages show that the ancient god was known to many parts of Europe. 'To the Christian recorder he was the enemy of the New Religion

and was therefore equated with the principle of evil, in other words the devil'. Similarly in India the deities of the aboriginals are also called devils. Witchcraft was declared to be a heretical practice and from the 13th century onwards the Church fought successfully against paganism. This history has been well documented by Dr. Murray.

The present work is divided into seven chapters on the Horned God, the Worshippers, the Priesthood, the Rites, Religious and Magical Ceremonies, the Position of the Witch and the Divine Victim. In the first chapter the author has traced the continuance of the worship of the horned deity from the earliest known period. In this connection particular reference may be made to the horned deity of Mohenjodaro, identified with *Siva-pasupati.* In the chapter on Rites he has dealt with the rites and other ceremonies, such as homage to god, sacrifices, prayers and the like. In the chapter on religion and magical ceremonies he has tried to draw a distinction between the two by saying that magic acts alone, it engenders its own force and depends on nothing outside itself, whereas religion acknowledges a power beyond itself and acts entirely by the motivation of that power'. (p. 118). While dealing with the position of the witch in the social structure he has made some valuable observations. The witch was in fact a doctor always attending to the needs of man and therefore she occupied an honourable position in society. Murray has rightly observed that, 'religion and medical science united against the witches, and when the law could no longer be enforced against them, they were vilified in every way that human tongue or pen could invent'. (p. 145). In the last chapter the author has dealt with the divine victim; in the primitive cult of Western Europe, the god was sacrificed. There were three methods of killing the victim, killing by fire, by shedding blood and by some form of asphyxiation. Such sacrifices are in reality fertility cults.

All these subjects thus discussed have been well documented from original sources. The work contains some well produced original illustrations. This type of research has not yet been made in India, which undoubtedly offers a fertile field for such enquiries. India's vast literary treasures, ancient and medieval,

offer greater scope for such enquiries. It is hoped that Murray's work will inspire Indian scholars to take up the thread and that will undoubtedly open a new vista in Indian anthropology.

S. R. Das,

Primitive Man and His World Picture. *By Wilhelm Koppers. Translated by Edith Raybould. Sheed and Warp, London and New York. pp. 264 including appendices and index.*

This is perhaps the first English translation of Koppers' books. It is a pity that most of the works of the Viennese School of Anthropology yet remain untranslated into English. Koppers' book on the Bhils of Central India is still out of reach of the English reading public.

Koppers in this work makes out a strong case against the evolutionist school and characterises their scheme of the evolution of human society as erroneous. In the beginning there was no promiscuity, no primitive communism and no belief in a multitude of spirits and goblins. Recent researches have proved the existence of monogamy, traces of private property and the belief in one Supreme Being among people who are on the lowest level of material culture. It is interesting to note how the theory of primitive communism is torn to shreds by the arguments of historical ethnologists as well as of the functionalists.

This book takes us one step nearer to Maitland's forecast that by and by anthropology will have the choice between becoming history or nothing. Koppers has welcomed Evans-Pritchard's new move towards 'history-mindedness' and has admitted his plea for treating anthropology as a form of historiography and as a branch of the Humanities. Without feeling jubilant over Evans-Pritchard's so-called 'conversion' as manifested in his Marret Lecture 1950 and subsequently elaborated in his Broadcast lectures*, one can definitely say that historical ethnology shorn of the extravagances of Elliot-Smith and Perry still holds ground as a fruitful approach in anthroplogical analysis.

*Published as '*Social Anthropology*'. London, Cohen and West, 1951, sh. 8/6.

One example of this method is the explanation offered by Schmidt for the existence of marriage prohibitions in the form of exogamy and incest in most societies of the world. These prohibitions 'regulated the surplus of centripetal forces naturally inherent in the family organization'. Marriage within the family would also undermine parental authority. These prohibitions led to the formation of wider social groupings. Here as elsewhere the historical ethnologist and the functionalist are on common ground.

The major portion of this work deals with the religious concepts of primitive man. Koppers' own researches among the Yamana of Terra del Fuego and among the Bhils of Central India and Furer-Haimendorf's work on the Chenchus of Hyderabad strengthens the original thesis of Schmidt that the earliest man was a monotheist and that the most primitive races had a firm belief in the benevolent Supreme Being. Belief in evil spirits and demons come in at a later stage and results in the growth of what is called by that unsatisfactory term originating with Tylor 'animism'. Both Schmidt and Koppers dismiss as untenable the older view that religion is the outcome of 'dream imaginings and experience of fear'. When we reach the end of the book one has the feeling that Koppers began with a general enunciation and proved Schmidt's contention, some sort of a Q. E. D.

As far as the material on India is concerned a lot more field work should be done before we can argee wholeheartedly with what Koppers has said about the religious concepts of primitive man. The trouble in India is that our primitive tribes have not lived in complete isolation. The existence of Hinduism which has strains of both monotheism and polythesim and its continued impact, diluted as well as direct, through several centuries, has given the tribal his whole fabric of religious lore from which it is difficult to sift the tribal from non-tribal elements.

Sachchidanand.

Vanyajati. *Vol. 1., No. 1., January 1953. Published by the Bharatiya Adimjati Sevak Sangh, Kingsway, Delhi. Price Twelve annas.*

We welcome the appearance of this illustrated quarterly magazine in English and Hindi devoted to the cause of the aboriginal inhabitants of India. Its object is not merely to dispense new information regarding tribal people among specially interested readers, but also to create a larger interest among the general public in the culture as well as the measures of uplift and social reform among them which have been undertaken by the Government of the Republic of India.

The first issue contains three informative articles by Dr. P. C. Biswas of Delhi, Prof. T. C. Das of Calcutta and Mr. P. G. Shah of Bombay.

We wish all success to our young contemporary.

N. K. Bose.

Tribal and Rural Welfare in Orissa 1951-52. *Issued by the Tribal and Rural Wefare Department, Government of Orissa.*

This illustrated booklet gives an account of the various efforts made by the Government of Orissa for the education and economic uplift of the backward portions of the State.

The details furnished are interesting and show how the chief obstacle in the path have been a lack of suitable workers and, secondly, the slowness of the backward classes themselves to take advantage of the opportunities offered to them. In spite of that the results seem to be encouraging.

N. K. Bose.

The Bulletin of the French School of the Far-East. *Tome XLIV.—1947-1950.*

This was published in commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary of the French School of the Far-East. It contains a series of detailed and rather technical essays. The more important ones are :

Three on Buddhism : on the Buddhist sects of the Small Vehicle and their Abhidharmapitaka ;

'On the notion of 'right' in Hinayanist Indo-China' ;

'On Alexander and Buddhism'.

There is one essay on Balinese studies.

It contains further 2 studies on Hinduism, viz., on the origins and the birth of Ravana in the Ramayana of Laos and one on the Vedic Nighantu.

Two studies are devoted to the Khmers :

'Garuda in the Khmer art' and on the meaning of 'Ba' and 'Me' affixes for the names of Khmer monuments.

Finally there is a study on :

'The Scythic name of Poseidon',

'The royal burials of the dynasty of the Posterior' Le Cambodian studies.

X.

Cave Artists of South Africa. *By Eric Rosenthal. Published by A. A. Balkema, Cape Town (South Africa), 1953. 48 pages and illustrations.*

This small book contains 48 unpublished reproductions of rock paintings collected by the late Dorothea Bleek with a biographical introduction on Miss Bleek by Eric Rosenthal and an archaeological introduction by A. J. H, Goodwin. The paintings vividly represent the life and activities of Bushmen and Hottentots of South Africa, depicting chiefly hunting and fighting scenes. Although the paintings do not appear to be very ancient in origin, yet they have an interest of their own as showing the artistic impulse and technique of primitive peoples.

P. K. Mitra.

Agris : A Socio-Economic Survey. *By D. N. Kale. Asia Publishing House, Bombay ; Price Rs. 16/8/-. pp. 411.*

The Agris are a small community spread over the north and central Konkan littoral. They are mainly agriculturists and provide many problems worthy of study with a view to social and economic developments of that part of the country.

This book is the result of research taken up under the guidance of Prof. G. S. Ghurye of Bombay. There can be no doubt as to the value of the collection of folk-songs, an exhaustive vocabulary of the Agar language, which is a dialect

of Marathi, dialogues, life-sketches and economic schedules. The author's attempt to build up a skeleton grammar of the language is no less praiseworthy. In the book under review we find a clear and vivid account of every aspect of Agri life.

Dr. Kale occasionally adopts a moralist's attitude, no doubt, with a sincere motive and with sympathy ; but the task of an anthropologist is that of collecting and evaluating evidence and in drawing conclusions from it and raising questions. The attitude displayed in the book is however that of a social reformer whose aim is to remedy the evils present in a particular society or group. This pragmatic bias has naturally reduced the purely objective merits of the book to some extent.

Inspite of all the valuable materials contained in the book, we are constrained to point out that the arrangement and division into paragraphs and chapters are somewhat loose and arbitrary. The illustrations are not well reproduced. The bibliography has been compiled rather carelessly. A more consistent method of giving references should have been adopted. The names and initials of authors are, in many cases, wrong and even the titles of the books referred to are sometimes incorrectly given.

Apart from these remediable oversights and defects, the book is valuable for the insight into economic problems and their relation to social custom.

L. K. Roy.

The Changing Map of Asia. *Edited by W. Gordon East and O. H. K. Spate,*

The volume under review outlines in a systematic manner the rapid changes that are taking place in the political and economic structure of Asia.

Every war leaves its stamp on the face of a country. The second World War has brought about spectacular changes in the political make-up of Asia. The dismemberment of the Japanese Empire, the freeing of India from the yoke of British Raj, the abandonment of Burma, Ceylon, Palestine by Britain, the division of the sub-continent of India into India and Pakistan, the clash of cultures in the Levant and in Malaya, the planned development

of Siberia, the turmoil in China and Korea, the struggle of nationalism in Indo-china and Indonesia etc. are dramatic political changes in the map of Asia. Similar radical changes are also taking place in the economic sphere. Though the tendency is towards industrialisation yet it is certain that agrarian problems are no less significant. The book clearly points out how Asia is re-shaping herself against a geopolitical background in which the Soviet Union and the United States are engaged in a many-fronted contest.

Maps and statistical tables add to the value of the book.

R. P. Singh.

POSTSCRIPT to p. 141

Wheeler's excavation at Mohenjo-daro (see ***The Illustrated London News*, *May 20, 1950***) has revealed a large platform of burnt brick on a podium of mud-brick. It is about 150 ft. long (later twice enlarged) and still stands to a height of 25 ft. with arrangements for 'air-ducts' and 'loading platform'. It has been taken to be of the nature of a granary, but, as we find from the description, it differs in type from the Great Granary of Harappa. The actual nature and purpose of the structure have yet to be established.

H. Sarkar.

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